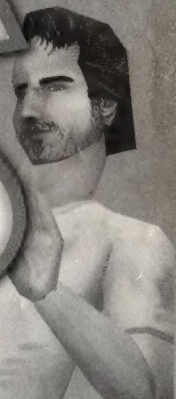


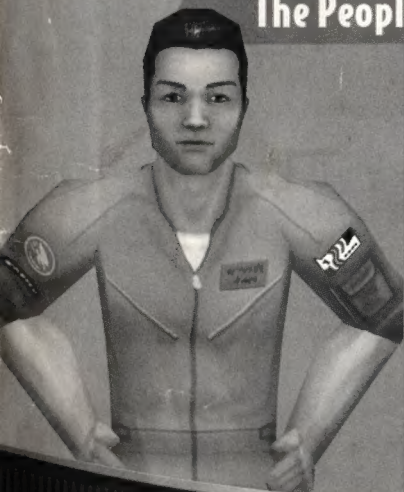


The Sims™

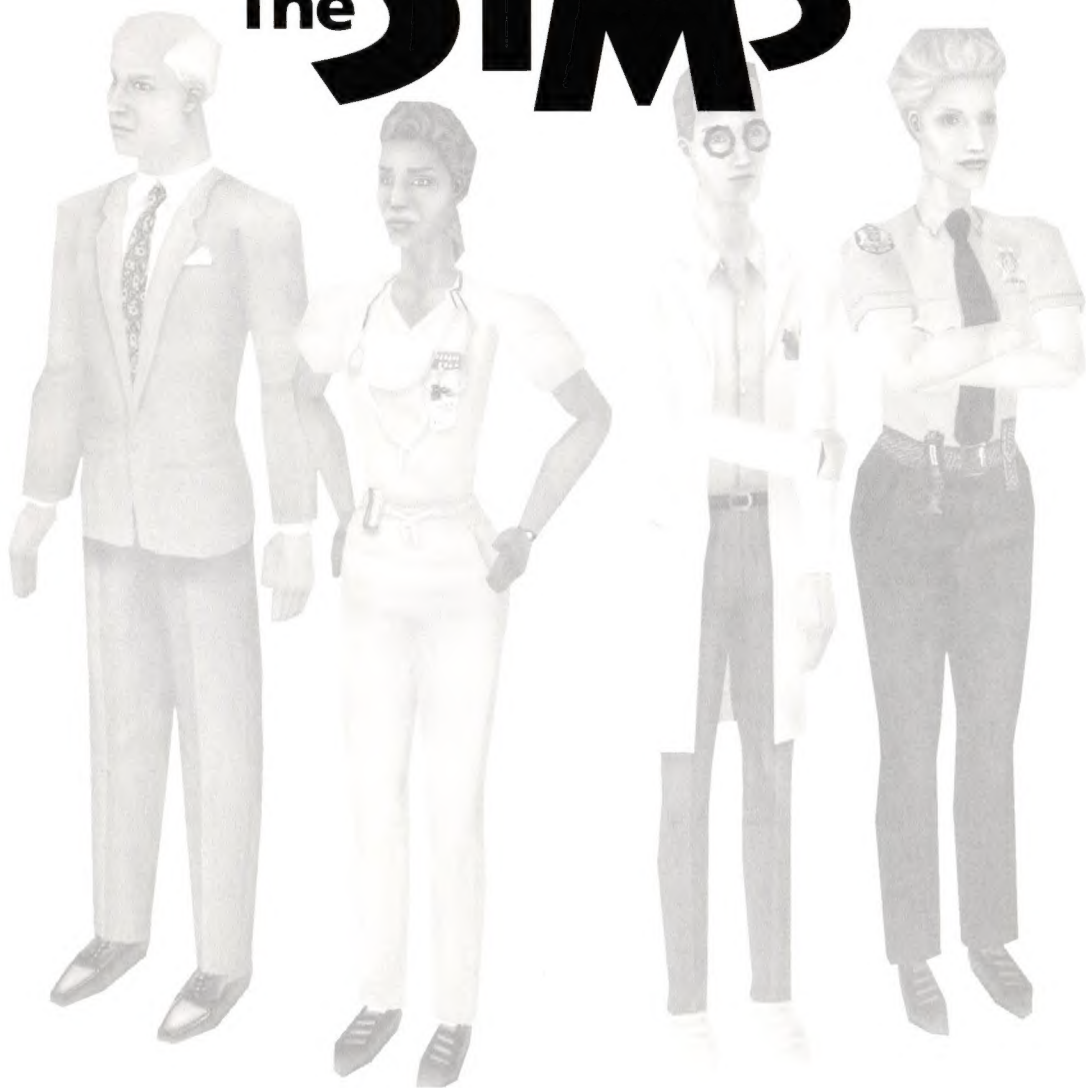
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The Sims™



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THE SIMS™: A WORLD UNTO ITS OWN

Romance. Jealousy. Destruction. Intrigue. You might think it's just a typical day in our nation's capital. No, it's much more interesting than that. It's another world entirely, and quite a vivid one. Welcome to the world of *The Sims*.

Settle back, get comfortable—there's a lot going on here. This isn't just a computer game, you know. Most computer games present you with a fixed point of view: you might be directly battling devils or demons behind the joystick, or you might have a character within the game that acts as your directed emissary. Sometimes you might simply be an observer in an artificial place, space, or time.

Some simulation-style games can even immerse you in a rich world of dynamic activity, where conditions change both subtly and dramatically, according to a wealth of possible decisions you make or directions you take. Yet even simulations hold you within a closed mindset of sorts, however many the alternatives. You can never seem to get beneath the skin of the game's characters.

That's not so in *The Sims*. You get to see your Sims face-to-face. And your decisions will put them in each other's faces. For that matter, your decisions direct the very design of their personalities. We're not talking cardboard-cutout characters who are either good or bad, on or off—these Sims are creatures of moods, of urges, of soaring desires—even if those desires are for pizza. In short, your Sims can be a lot like you. Or your parents. Or the President's parents. You get to design them that way.

The Sims is a full-blown world, but one that is intimate rather than expansive. It's a world of your own handiwork: if you're more interested in home electronics than houseplants, your Sims household can be gizmo heaven. If you want to fill your houses with Sims who would rather samba than scour sinks, so be it. But once you've set it up, a Sim household will make some demands upon you.

Like our everyday world, the world of the Sims requires judgment and decision-making, in affairs from the trivial to the life threatening. Just as we learn to adapt to the full scope of our world's challenges, so must you guide your Sims, from their breakfast selection to their career track. And as you'll see, they do some decision-making on their own, and sometimes you might want to pull your hair out from watching what they come up with.

However, you're much more than merely an observer, watching the myriad details occurring moment-by-moment in a household, and in a neighborhood. (Though it's hard to deny the allure of simply peering into the lives of these marvelously complicated creatures you created). No, you create the very electronic marrow of these beings, assign subtle personality traits, and set them in a home of your own design. As with any household,

there are periods of peace and cooperation, but then all hell can break loose. And that's when you need to manipulate, er, guide your Sims.

Sometimes your role might seem like that of a theater director, coaxing out of your Sims a life performance. As with Shakespeare, there is tragedy, there is comedy. There is the very stuff of existence, from the crumbs on the tables to the irritation that passes between people cooped up together in the house too long. In that sense, *The Sims* might seem to be a personal sitcom—whether it's *I Love Lucy* or *Friends*, is up to you.

You can sit back and watch, but the Sim world is one where you can't help but feel connected, and where you probably want to intervene. One of your Sims might get quite frustrated—perhaps because the house is a mess and she's late for work. Maybe you could have somebody in the family tell her a good joke—hey, it works on us sometimes, doesn't it? Feel free to experiment, just as you might do in your normal life.

Play the Newbies (at 7 Sim Lane) in the tutorial house to get a feel for how to play. Then check out the rest of the manual for how to design your Sims and their houses, and for gameplay hints. The section on The Soul of a Sim (page 37) gives you a little more insight into their motives and behaviors, which, as with people, can sometimes be puzzling. The Daily Life material within The Soul section puts the milk on the cereal of daily concerns. And the Auntie Simone section (page 95) might help if your Sims seem to have the sense of a push broom, and you can't figure out how to get them sweeping.

We do want you to have some sympathy for your Sims. We know it's hard to resist tormenting them (that little cruel streak in all of us gleefully emerges), but do give them a decent meal now and then. Of course, if some clumsy Sim you've designed burns a house down, you can always build another.

But hey, it's just a game—play and have fun. And if it seems at times that someone's watching over your shoulder, or directing you to the refrigerator, just ignore it. Probably just a cold coming on.



TUTORIAL: THE NEWBIES STRETCH THEIR LEGS

We wouldn't think of just tossing you in to the lion's den of a Sim household without a little grounding on how to feed and clothe those lions. You've got to have good reflexes and sound judgment to respond to all those crises your creations are going to cause. Thus, we provide you with a tutorial game to gently introduce you to the colorful Sims' world.

The tutorial introduces you to all of the basics of Sims management, and gives you a sense of the game's potentials and perils. There is an almost infinite variety of ways you can get into—and out of—tantalizing trouble in *The Sims*, but the tutorial just shows you some samples. We know you'll create plenty of mischief on your own.

When you first load the game, you enter the Neighborhood, a scenic place with a variety of homes and home sites. Move your cursor over the homes to get an information box detailing facts about the homes, including their purchase prices for when you're ready to do some shopping. Single-click on the Newbie Family home at 7 Sim Lane to jump into the wonderfully rich realm of *The Sims*.

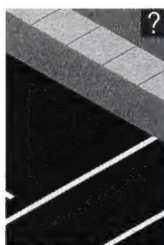


THE TUTORIAL HOUSE

The Tutorial game is self-directed. Simply follow the onscreen window prompts guiding you on how to direct the Sims in action, and how to interpret their moods and behaviors. After you complete a task, the window disappears and a new window appears to direct you in your next task. Some of the windows have an OK button that needs to be clicked for you to move to the next window. You can hit the ESC key to cancel the tutorial, which will leave you with this game to manage all by your lonesome.



You can play on your own in the Sim world by clicking on the little line in the upper right-hand corner of the prompt window, which shrinks the onscreen tutorial window to a question-mark symbol at the upper right hand corner of the screen. Clicking on the question mark brings up the next prompt window, though the window also returns on its own depending on your game decisions.



You can't really do anything wrong—just keep your eye on the Needs panel to monitor how tutorial activities change the Sims' moods. Some of the other information panels update dynamically as well, dependent on game development. Mood management proves to be a major factor in your game progress. Work through the entire tutorial to see the scope of the game.



You can repeat the tutorial at any time by clicking on the Options button in the Control Panel, clicking on the Play Options button and then clicking on the Reset Tutorial button. The tutorial game resets back to its original conditions.



THE OPTIONS BUTTON



The Newbies are one of the local neighborhood families; you can go back and play their house as a game, or select another. The Newbie family can interact with your other game families as well.

The tutorial is just an appetizer: To get to the real meat (or cheese sandwich, for you vegetarians) of the game, you have to investigate the Soul of a Sim/Daily Life section of this manual. Hey, you don't think we wrote them just because we love the alphabet, do you? Check out that information and go make some Sims your parents would be proud of. And if you make some that they'd be horrified by, tell 'em your sister did it.

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

The Neighborhood is where you go directly after the game loads. Play the tutorial game there to get a feel for gameplay basics. Check the manual's tutorial section (page 5) for details.

GETTING ACQUAINTED

You made it! This is the place where Sims go about their days—and nights—and you get to be the master of ceremonies. It's a cozy place, as you can see, but there are many dramas taking place behind the walls of all these homes, and you have the keys to open any door.



Let's start by looking at the lay of the land. Your Neighborhood has a number of houses, some built out, and some barely more than foundations. If you move your mouse around to any of the houses you can play, you see their roofline disappear to grant you a view of the house's contents. There is also a pop-up window listing information about that house. If the house is empty, you see its asking price and the house address.



If the house is occupied, you see that family's last name, their total household assets, how many friends the occupants have, and the house address. The faces of the occupants are also displayed.

Clicking on an occupied house swoops you right into the ongoing drama of that family's life. You have to quickly assess their situations and move right into household management, or mismanagement, if that's what you're good at. You might want to check out the Control Panel section (page 13) before you set anything on fire or cause any family fights.



Clicking on an unoccupied house only gets you a dialog box telling you nobody lives there and you need to pick a family to move in. That's where those buttons at the top of the Neighborhood come in. The left-most button is the Select or Create Family button; clicking it takes you to the Select A Family window, where some Sim souls are itching for the chance to stain some Neighborhood carpets.





You can choose one of the crews here to man (or woman) your house, or you can create your own. The entire Frankensteinian scheme for creating (as well as choosing, moving in, or deleting existing) families is detailed in the Families, From Start to Finish section, (page 29). Go there to get a quick overview of how you can immediately start making—and then start making mayhem—with your Sims.

EVICT, DESTROY AND BUILD ANEW

Back in the Neighborhood, what if you see a home you truly cherish, but it's occupied by a bunch of loutish oafs far from the splendid Sim specimens you design? SIMple-Kick 'em out! (Having a conscience is not a pre-requisite to playing *The Sims*; sometimes it can even get in the way). All you have to do is click on the Evict or Bulldoze button and click on the house in question with your new Bulldozer cursor.



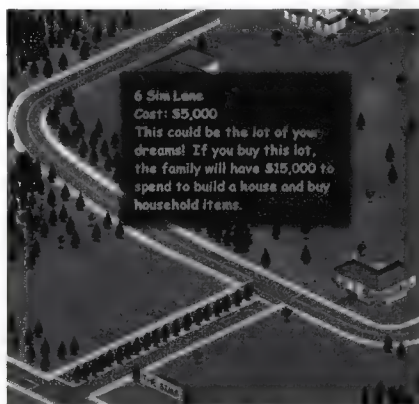
You get a dialog (which you can back out of) telling you that family's net worth and asking if you want to evict them. You can press the ESC key if you decide you don't want to bulldoze anything or click on the toggling Bulldoze button to get back to where you began. Click on YES with the bulldoze cursor active. Everyone in that house is sent to the Select A Family window, where they are then available to place in a house when you're feeling more favorably disposed toward them. (They keep any relationships they had, and the money from the sale of their house and belongings will increase their net worth accordingly).

If you've emptied the house of occupants, you see a dialog chance to bulldoze that empty house. Click on NO and those dream digs are yours for occupation—if your Sims can afford it. And if you really don't care for the looks of any Neighborhood house, occupied or not,

you can reduce it to rubble and build anew. Click on the Evict or Bulldoze button, select any unoccupied house and click on your building victim. The dialog box then asks if you really want to smash that place to smithereens. Click on Yes to do the dirty deed. Click on No if the tiny voice of decency rallies.



Once destroyed (who listens to those tiny voices anyway?), move the cursor back into the area once occupied by the house and a pop-up window will display telling you that you can demolish no more. However, if you want to buy and rebuild the lot, then go to the Select A Family screen and choose a family, or create your own. See the Families, From Start to Finish section (page 29) to understand either of these processes.



Once you get your family under your cursor's belt, you can buy a lot. You are automatically zoomed into a close view of your new property. Click on the Build button in the Control Panel to select the tools to begin erecting your mansion. All of the intricacies of house building are examined in the Building Your Dream House (page 84).

Clicking on the Live mode button in the midst of your building does give you the chance to get your Sims reaction to their unfinished house. But once they find out there aren't any cold cuts in the fridge—in fact, there is no fridge—you're likely to find them none too pleased. Better complete at least a few basic rooms first before you test their tolerance.

Then review the Daily Life section (page 44) to get some Sim sense—or at least to get a sense of how to tame these unruly Sims.



QUITTER!

And if you're really not happy with the Neighborhood, just click on the Quit button to depart the Sims' world of dynamic fascination and return to your own. Look around you—are you making the right choice?



BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE! VIEWING WEB PAGES BUTTON

Click on the View Web Pages button to bring up a browser to view neighborhood families web pages. At the start of the game, you see the Goth and the Tutorial houses displayed, but as you Export HTML pages of families you create, the list expands. See the section on Other Sims WEB Wonders (page 102).



THE CONTROL PANEL (IGNORE THE PERSON BEHIND THE SCREEN)

The Control Panel is the launching board for all of your endeavors in *The Sims*, from sending your favorite Sim to water the tulips to setting the game options. The Control Panel is evident at the bottom of your screen when you are looking into the lives of your Sims, whether they are in Live mode or not. The Live Mode Icon or F1 key will toggle between the full display of the Control Panel or just its tools.



The Control Panel has a number of different modes, views, information readouts and options, which we discuss here. Most of the gameplay activities are discharged by using the controls on the panel's left side; the right side is mainly for readouts on current Sim states. Most of the Control Panel tools have a "rollover" tooltip that will appear if you hover the cursor over the tool or button in question.



You need an intimate familiarity with the Control Panel to (naturally) control your Sims. And sometimes it seems five Control Panels won't do.

THE MODES

In *The Sims*, modes are game states where you can accomplish certain types of game tasks, whether related to Sim management or file management. You enter the various modes by clicking on the mode icons, located in the arc on the left side of the Control Panel. Active mode choices are highlighted.

LIVE MODE

The Live mode icon rests at the top of the mode selections because it's the big daddy of all modes. In Live mode your Sims do what you want them to do—or not, depending on just how cantankerous they are at the moment. Live mode is just that, live: The game clock is ticking, the Sims plans are clicking, and moods might be swinging. If that's too much for

the moment, you can always pause the game by clicking on the Pause button in the line of Game Speed buttons below the game clock (or by pressing the pause-toggling P key on your keyboard).



Scrolling

There are several ways to move throughout your Sim territory. If you bring the cursor to any of the screen edges, the game terrain moves in the direction of that edge. You may notice you can scroll off into the void at magnified zoom. Fear not! Just reverse the scrolling direction to the opposite edge and you return to the comfort of your perfectly balanced, happy household. If you don't like living (well, scrolling) on the edge, you can turn edge scrolling off in the Options panel under Play Options.

You can also skate across the grounds by pressing your right mouse button and dragging in the direction you want to move; naturally, you cover more ground more quickly by being at a closer zoom level. Clicking and releasing your right mouse button centers the screen on the spot where you clicked. Scrolling is still active in Buy and Build modes. And just to make sure you don't have too few scrolling options, holding down the ALT key brings up a four-arrow headed cursor: Move that cursor in any arrow's direction, and the game terrain follows. Cursor keys scroll the screen as well.

Views

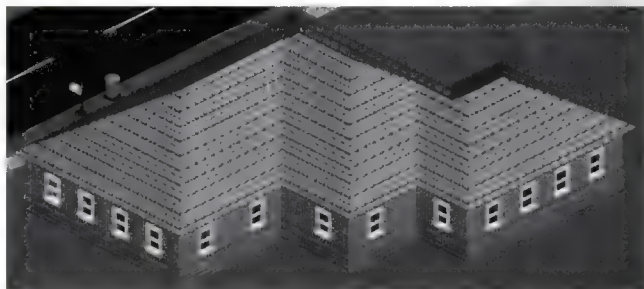
Live mode affords a number of viewing possibilities for your Sim household. Let's begin at the ground floor and go from there. Sim houses can be one or two stories tall. If your higher-income Sims have moved into prime real estate, you have two floor views to choose from in the Story icons on the panel's far left. But if your family isn't rolling in the green from selling any Internet stock options, the second-floor icon is grayed-out. Clicking on either Story icon takes you to the depicted floor, as you might have guessed.

STORY ICONS



To the right of the Story icons is the Roof icon. Clicking on it will display (of all things) the roof of your Sim's house. Remove it by selecting Walls Up, Cutaway, or Walls Down mode. If the house is two stories, roof views are dependent on the selected story, e.g., choosing Roof with the first story selected only displays roofing built for that story.

ROOF ICON



ZOOMING AND ROTATING

We can't deny it. One of the big lures of The Sims is you can peek right into the lives of these digital creatures and marvel at their antics. At times you want to draw back and get an overview of total household activities; at others you want to be right there in the room, so you feel the sting of an insult or the charm of a compliment.

Here's how you zoom. The diamond-shaped box on the left of the Control Panel has a plus button at its top and a minus button at its bottom. There are three levels of zoom: Zoom in with the plus button, and zoom out with the minus. The corresponding buttons are grayed-out (unavailable) if you achieved the highest or lowest level.

ZOOM BUTTONS



Also within the Zoom diamond are the Rotation buttons, giving you a different perspective on the action, or a different angle for better object placement. Clicking on the right-pointing arrow rotates the view 90 degrees to the right; clicking on the left-pointing arrow rotates the house 90 degrees to the left. Four successive clicks on the same Rotation button returns you to the original view—at least that's what our geometry teachers told us.

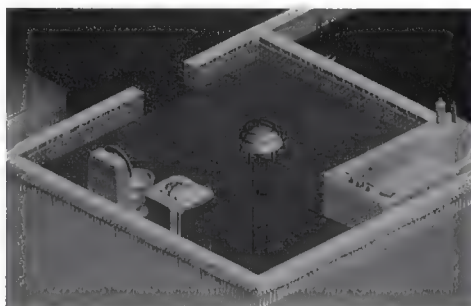


WALLS

You have a few options when it comes to how much of your Sims' situation you want to see. Above and to the right of the Zoom diamond are the Walls icons. Click on the "open box" icon next to the roof icon if you want to give your Sims some privacy—All the rooms have full walls, so you can only see deeper room details by rotating the house.



Click on the middle Wall icon to get a more dynamic walling effect. Walls drop to floor level when you, all-powerful Oz, pass your cursor through them, and they return to their height when your cursor exits the area. Click on the bottom Wall icon to keep your walls down. Certainly a bird's-eye view, but rather lacking in aesthetics (not to mention decency).



Game Speeds and Clock

As mentioned above, you can pause the game by hitting the P key on your keyboard, or by clicking on the Pause button next to the Zoom diamond. When paused, a large red "Paused" on your screen appears, and the Pause button blinks with a red highlight. Pausing the game can give you a chance to catch your breath if your Sims are veering out of control, and you don't want to chase them all over creation.



GAME SPEED BUTTONS

While paused you can click on any of your Sim's faces on the panel, and you can read their current Needs state and any of the other situational readouts. You can also set up any Sim activities in the interaction queue (page 47) while the game is paused.

The three game speeds are Normal, High and Ultra. Normal is just that : The day passes at its regular pace, with the game clock (and the associated daylight/evening lighting states) moving at a steady pace. Sims' lives move briskly: You see that the game clock speeds up when everyone's asleep or out of the house.

The keyboard comes in handy here to jolt or stun the game speeds. Press 1 for Normal, 2 for High, 3 for Ultra and ~ (the tilde mark) to Pause. Click on the High or Ultra speed settings if you want to accelerate game actions to achieve a certain goal, like getting the gal off to work so the guy can play video games in peace.

Budget

Your household's total funds are dynamically displayed below the Speed buttons. Remember, your Sims may lust for a plasma TV, but if daddy's not bringing in the dough (nor momma as well), you might be sending your Sims to skid row.

Click on the dollar figure (actually, these Sims use Simoleons, naturally) to bring up the Budget window. It will show household income and expense totals for the current day and for the past three days, broken down into specific credits and debits. Days begin at midnight; totals are updated throughout the day.

	3 Days	Today
Income:		
Job	\$1,470	\$490
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$0
Expenses:		
Bills Paid	\$200	\$0
Food	\$350	\$20
Repair/Cleaning/Grooming	\$0	\$0
New Purchases	\$0	\$0
Household Items	\$0	\$0
Architecture/Landscaping	\$0	\$0
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$0	\$0
Cash Flow		
	\$1,270	\$470
Household Account Total: \$326		
Household Net Worth: \$28,729		
Days Since Move-In: 45		

OK

Hover your mouse over any of the category entries to get a tooltip explanation. Click on the window's OK button to close the window.

Family Friends

To the right of the glowing smiley face is the total number of friends that the family has – these are the collective number of friends the entire family has made and maintains. Click on the Family Friends number for a pop up description.

BUY MODE

Finally! A chance to go on a spree! Who cares if the living room is full of exercise equipment and computers when you can bring in a model railroad? You can get yourself in a lot of budgetary trouble here, but heaven knows, it's fun. Clicking on the Buy mode icon reveals a subpanel of category icons. Click on a category icon and the purchasable items within that selected category displayed to the right appear. Go to the Buy Mode: Furnishing Your World section (page 77) for the specifics on how to buy, how to place, how to sell (and how to suffer buyer's remorse).



BUILD MODE

Click on the Build mode icon to live out your architectural dreams. Once you're in Build mode, you notice a sub-panel of building tool categories and their specific tools that can transform a Sim hovel into a Sim mansion—at a price, of course. Go to the Build Mode: Building Your Dream House section (page 84) for elaboration.

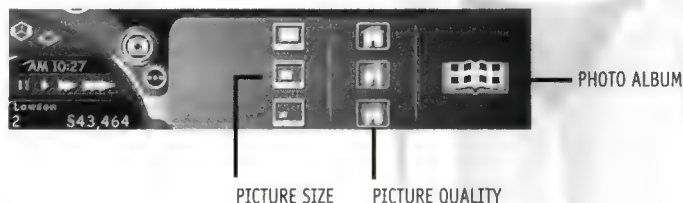


CAMERA MODE

Sims engaging in compromising behavior should beware: Camera mode lets you collect the evidence in pictorial form. When you enter Camera mode, the game pauses. Up comes an onscreen frame indicating the area to be captured by the camera's lens. You can move that frame around with your cursor for the best angle.



The left-hand set of tools on the Camera mode sub-panel adjust the size of the frame for smaller or larger pictures; they go from large to medium to small, clicked top to bottom. The right-hand set of tools set the picture's quality, selected from high to medium to low, top to bottom. The lower the quality, the less disk space will be used to save these pictures. If you hold down the Control key, you can use your keyboard's arrow keys to resize your frame vertically and horizontally and see a pixel count of the resized frame to the left of the frame-size icons. All shots taken after you've resized the frame are taken at the new size, until you resize it again or select one of the standard sizes.





To take a shot, select picture size and quality, position your frame, and click the left mouse button. The picture then appears in a photo album, which is also accessed by clicking the Photo Album button in the sub-panel. There is a blinking cursor below your new picture prompting you to enter a title or caption for the sensational shot you just took. You can change the caption any time by clicking in the text box.



And if you aren't the most energetic photojournalist around, the game takes up your slack. Significant events in the game are immortalized by Auto Snapshots, which capture those magnificent moments into the Photo Album folder for you. You can review and caption these pictures in the Photo Album, or delete them if you don't want to relive the sordid past. You can turn off the Auto Snapshots feature in the Play Options selections, which are explained in the Play Options section.

You can use the arrow buttons at each side of the Photo Album to page through (from first photo taken to the last) your photo collection, and the inner arrows for the next and previous photos. If a photo doesn't measure up, just click the Delete button while the offending picture is active; the dialog box asks if you want to reconsider. Deleting a shot returns you to active Camera mode to take another. Or you can click on the Done button to move back to active Camera mode.

All of the View and Rotate tools work in Camera mode, so you get the best angle on your voyeurism. Images are saved as JPEGs in the PhotoAlbum folder in the UserData folder within *The Sims* directory. And if you're trying to make them feel guilty by collecting pictures of their unclean toilets, you've got too much time on your hands.

OPTIONS MODE

Click on the Options mode icon to open the Options panel. Here you can set some gameplay and file management options.



THE OPTIONS BUTTON



Save

Clicking on Save saves your current game to your hard disk. You return to that game by clicking on that household within the Neighborhood.

Neighborhood

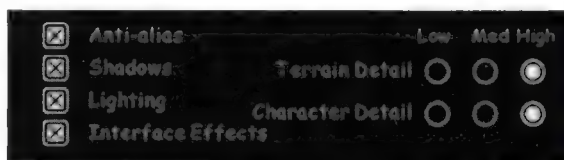
Clicking on the Neighborhood button takes you from your current game back to the Neighborhood. You are asked if you want to save the game, if you haven't already saved. You can use the Cancel button to opt out of the Neighborhood visit.

Quit

Clicking on Quit brings up a Save Game dialog if you haven't saved, or a "Are You Sure?" dialog if you have. Remember, if you choose to quit, you have to return to your regular life, where your family members won't do your bidding like Sims do. Are you sure?

Graphics Options

Clicking on the Graphics Options icon opens a sub-panel of game-graphics choices. Placing Xs in any of the boxes turns that option on; choosing the higher values places more of a processing demand on your CPU, which can consequently slow down gameplay or screen redraws on a less-powerful computer.



ANTI-ALIAS

Smooths the edges of objects.

SHADOWS

Enhances the realism of some objects by placing shadows

LIGHTING

Enables light cast by objects, such as lamps. (The game still has ambient lighting with this option off).

INTERFACE EFFECTS

Enables slick interface dissolves

TERRAIN DETAIL

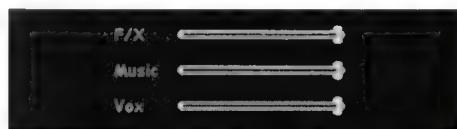
Enables progressively higher detail level for your Sim lawns.

CHARACTER DETAIL

Enables higher degrees of light shading and filtering on your Sims.

Sound Options

Clicking on the Sound Options button brings up a three-choice panel controlled by dragging the box on each slider bar; dragging left decreases the effect, dragging right increases it. You can also click in the bar at the setting you want to establish and the box follows.



F/X

Controls the game's sound effects. Don't you want to know if the coffee's being ground?

MUSIC

Controls the dulcet tunes that put some melody into those Sim moods.

VOX

Lets you hear all of those conversational sound bytes your Sims so animatedly engage in.

Play Options

Use these choices for some gameplay automation.



AUTO-CENTERING

Checked causes any special events, such as a house fire or a baby's birth, to be immediately displayed onscreen for a brief period, and then your screen returns to its original position.

FREE WILL

Checked gives your Sims the ability to make autonomous decisions. (And sometimes, if they're mood is downright lousy, they won't listen to what you tell them to do, no matter what). If you uncheck Free Will, and don't direct your Sims to sustaining activity, they can suffer Needs failures, and can even die.

EDGE SCROLLING

Checked makes your Sim world terrain automatically scroll in the direction of the screen edge where you moved your cursor.

SIM IN BACKGROUND

Checked lets your Sims' lives carry on if you've Alt-Tabbed out of the game to go check the value of your stock options on the Net. Unchecked, the game pauses; checked, while you're away, The Sims will play.

QUICK TIPS

Checked displays tooltips and information panels for all of the relevant game areas just upon mouse rollover (no clicking needed). This automatically provides new players help for all areas of the game. After the first few times of play, a dialog will display asking if you want to turn the Quick Tips option off.

AUTO SNAPSHOT

Checked takes screenshots of significant moments in your Sim lives and automatically puts them in the photo album. If Autocenter is on, an autocentered event is shot. If Autocenter is off, no picture is taken. If there is a picture-in-picture (PIP) event in progress, that PIP event is captured.

LIVE PIP

(Picture-in-picture) Checked causes the screen to bring up a smaller window within your standard screen for events that are important. For instance, with Live PIP on, a burglar entering your house would be displayed larcenously live for a period of time in a smaller screen. You can close out of the PIP window by clicking on its close box, or else it disappears after a brief period.

Unchecked (and less of a drain on your processor), the PIP effect still occurs on a small screen within your game-world screen, but it is a static image. Essentially you get a screenshot of the beginning of the event: i.e., the burglar entering the house. Again, you can close this window directly or it goes away on its own.

EXPORT HTML

Checked puts JPEG screenshot files of a household's family members (with statistics), houses and house information (by address) into an HTML template we've created. (You can use your own template, and our data will be loaded into it). Templates are saved in the Web Pages folder of The Sims directory on your hard drive. The HTML pages are generated when the game is saved, and may need a long time to save. Turn off Export HTML for faster game saves. See page 102 for more information.

RESET TUTORIAL

Clicking on the Reset Tutorial button restores the tutorial game to the pristine state it was in before anyone came and released its Sims from electronic bondage. You can use it to replay the tutorial from the beginning to refresh your skills.



RESET TUTORIAL BUTTON

CHARACTER SUBPANELS

In Live mode, just to the right of the main Control Panel, you can see the family gallery, where you see the faces of the Sim residents in that household. The currently selected Sim's icon is highlighted. Check the Daily Life section (page 44) for information on the "action icons" associated with a selected Sim, seen at the top-left of the screen.



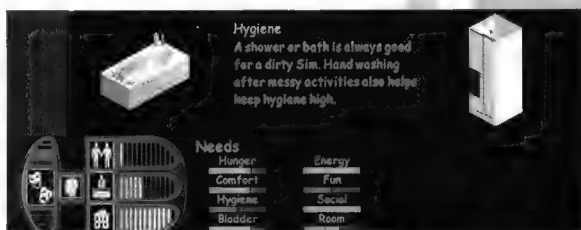
You can obtain a pack of personal information (isn't prying fun?) from the various subpanel readouts chosen by clicking the icons to the right of the face gallery. Be sure to consult the Daily Life section (page 44) for information on how best to manage (or mangle) your Sim's temperaments. Remember, clicking on the Needs text or the bar revealed in each subpanel brings up information (often mixed with advice) panels about that clicked category or concern.

Most of the buttons have a set of associated progress bars, which tally the "score" of each of the circumstances tracked by the buttons. All of those scores are relevant only to the selected, highlighted Sim. Choosing another Sim displays very different scores—these Sims aren't clones, you know.

The bars above and below the Mood button use Green above and Red below to indicate a soaring or plunging mood. The other buttons (Relationships, Job, House) display a tranquil blue for each of the bars—the more blue bars, the more good feelings for the tracked category.

Mood

The default selection is the Mood panel, viewed by clicking on the theatre masks icon. When the Mood button is chosen, the Needs panel is visible, displaying your Sim's present mental and physical states. Clicking on any of the Needs bars brings up an information panel about what that clicked state represents.

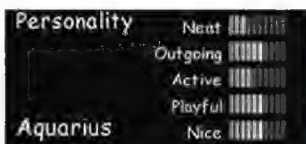


You know if your Sims need to be fed, watered or coddled by the ever-updated condition bars that track their tender feelings and bodily urges—from glaring red emergency states to the friendly green of purring satisfaction. Dynamic red and green triangles to the left or right of the bars indicate current negative or positive changes to those emotional states, with subsequent changes in the bar's coloring. Of course, when your Sims are **HUNGRY!**, or in some other charged state, they let you know in other ways as well. (They love to press your buttons, don't you know it!)

Personality

Selecting the Personality icon displays the chosen Sim's personality composite, those characteristics either assigned by you in the Create A Family window, or defaults for already-created characters. Clicking on any of the individual personality traits brings up an

information window about how the selected Sim's particular trait is evidenced in his or her behavior. The Sim's astrological sign is displayed here – it is a composite of their chosen Personality traits and is a quick indicator to show how compatible (or completely incompatible) two Sims might be.



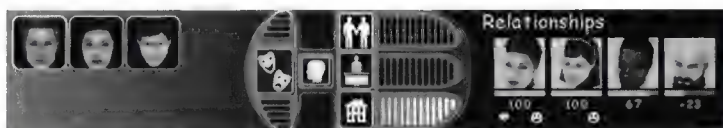
Relationships

Selecting the Relationships icon displays the face icons of any Sims your chosen Sim has a relationship with, with that relationship's score rendered in the bar below the face icon. In addition to the "it's a groove green" or the "I'm enraged red," the displayed point total has positive or negative values that match the bar's colorings. These values fluctuate with every interaction occurring between your Sims.



Special icons (such as a heart or smiley face) can sometimes be seen below the face, representing the selected Sim's partner(s) with whom there is a significant relationship. (Those situations are elaborated upon in the Daily Life section, page 44). Clicking on the faces in the Relationships panel brings up an information box revealing the gritty details of what's going on between the Sims in question.

Each individual Sim has his or her own set of friends (picky, aren't they?), and they are displayed in the Relationships panel, along with the current state of the friendship as tallied by Relationship points. Sims that have no friends can be sad Sims indeed.



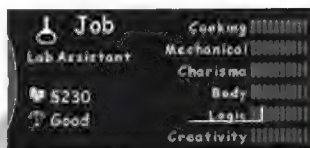
Friends, who are neighbors who have established positive relationships with your Sims' household, are tallied next to the household's funds account in the Control Panel. If your household has any friends, the total number of friends can be seen to the left of the household asset figure, along with a little smiley face.

You can click on the friends' number to get an onscreen dialog explaining those household friends. Having friends is an important means to progress in the game; see the Soul of a Sim (page 37) and Daily Lives sections (page 44).

Jobs

When the Job icon is chosen, the Job panel appears, registering the selected Sim's employment status, salary and current performance rating. The Skills subpanel displays what your Sim has learned, either from curling up with a good book or performing a skill-building action. For instance, the Body skill can be developed by pumping iron at the weight machine or by swimming in the pool. Skills relevant to the current job are underlined, with the vertical line indicating the number of skill points needed for a promotion to the next level in that career track.

Clicking on any of the skill rating categories brings up an information panel about that skill. Sims that are bums can still have many skill totals, but how are they going to pay for those spiffy new hedges they want around their house's perimeter?

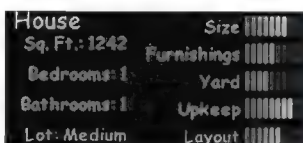


There are a host of career tracks your adult Sims can pursue (or neglect), and they are detailed in the Soul of a Sim section (page 37) and in the game's Reference card. It's critical to bring in needed cash to a household's coffers with a good job. Your Sims need better household objects to move along more efficiently in the game. So, pay attention to the basics: Get your Sim to work on time, keep them practicing and studying in their chosen profession, work on making friends and they'll move up the ladder. Slacker Sims tumble down the ladder, but they often seem pretty comfy sleeping on the ground.



House

Clicking on the House icon brings up a panel with a lot of statistical information about the house size, layout, and what's inside. Your Sims are quite concerned with their house's structure and condition, at both the aesthetic and essential level. They like open spaces, comfortable rooms, lots of windows and nice furnishings. And of course, it's always nice to have more than one bathroom. You see their mood enhancements when these conditions are fulfilled.



House	Size	
Sq. Ft.: 1242	Furnishings	
Bedrooms: 1	Yard	
Bathrooms: 1	Upkeep	
Lot: Medium	Layout	

Layout is a telling factor here too, for the efficient movement of your Sims around their household directly relates to their peace of mind. If you design or furnish their house in such a way that it makes the Sims take long, cumbersome trips to accomplish a task, or if objects block the clear pathway to items they're interested in, they won't hesitate to complain. Be a compassionate master: Make their house a home.

FAMILIES, FROM START TO FINISH

Family life is the essence of *The Sims*. Without the minute and detailed minglings (and mutilatings) of personality and possibility within your selected household, you have nothing but lawn decorating and fish watching to occupy your time. We're all stuck with our real families—but you could design a new, improved one here!

As you see in the Neighborhood section of the manual (page 8), it's not necessary to design one at all. You can actually select an existing household right in the Select A Family screen and move them right into the Neighborhood, by choosing the family and clicking on the house of your fancy—as long as they've got the dough. There's also an occupied house in the Neighborhood—click on that one and you are treated (or tormented) by the already established personalities in that household. Naturally this means you inherited all of the existing tensions or trivialities present in that home, but it does relieve you of assigning personality traits, and deciding if you like moustaches or miniskirts on your Sims, if those tasks trouble you.

However, there's much to be said for constructing the family and their environs piece by piece—whether your inclination is toward the Simpsons or the Brady Bunch, it's all up to you. Here's how it's done.

BIRTH OF A HOUSEHOLD

The Neighborhood is where it all begins. Check the Welcome to the Neighborhood section (page 8) to get all the particulars. Once in the 'hood, click on the Select or Create Family button. This brings you to the Select A Family window.

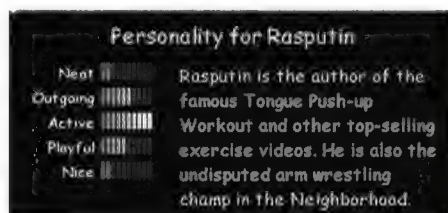
Here you see existing family members that have been evicted from homes, where they wait, patient in their holding pen, for you to house them again. This window is also a “limbo” for individuals or families you created, or those provided in the game, not yet placed in homes.





When you first enter the Select a Family screen, a dialog pops up to move you right into family creation. You are instructed to click on the Create New Family button. And if you happen to click on any of the empty slots where the existing families are housed, you go right to the Create a Family window also. The Create a Family information is in the Starting from Scratch section (page 31).

Each family slot on the window lists the family surname, family pictures, net worth and the number of friends that household has. Clicking on an individual in a slot brings up a small window listing their personality traits and biography, if one's been written. Double-clicking anywhere on the slot takes you to the Neighborhood, with that family loaded into your cursor. That's when you get to plop them into a house, and all the mania begins.



Hitting the ESC key while this family cursor is on returns you to the Select A Family window. Hitting the ESC key or Cancel button from the Select A Family window returns you to the Neighborhood.

Clicking on any family-occupied slot highlights the family and activates the Delete button at the window's bottom. Clicking on the Delete button sends all the selected family's members into the ether, never to return, though you do get a chance to cancel that brutal choice in a dialog box. The Move In Family button is also activated with a family slot selected, and clicking on it takes you to the Neighborhood for house buying and that chosen family's placement.



STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Here's where the real fun begins: You have the capability to bring a Sim of your own design into the world—truly an act of creation. Just as in your regular world, some acts of creation are benign, some are malign, and some are just plain kooky. It's your palette; paint away!

Click on the Create New Family button at the bottom of the window to bring up the all-powerful Create A Family window to get cracking. The blinking text box at the window's top is where you enter your family's last name, which is seen in the Select a Family window. If they moved in, you can see it when you move your cursor over occupied houses in the Neighborhood.



You need to enter a family name to begin your Sim design—even foul-tempered Sims deserve a name, don't they? Once named, click on the Add a New Sim button to begin the dirty work of design. That click has big consequences: You've entered the Create A Sim window, where your designer Sim takes shape. (Selected default choices are highlighted in the window).



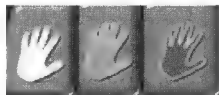
A CAMERA IN THE SIMS' DRESSING ROOM

The Create A Sim window is a busy place, with your proto-Sim bouncing at the ready in its appearance window on the right side. Perhaps the best way to begin putting things in order might be by selecting a sex for your Sim-to-be—gender is a pretty basic constituent of self from which to build a personality.

There is a pad of character tool buttons to the left of the appearance window; the male gender symbol at the pad's bottom-right is selected by default. Clicking on the female symbol button replaces that jaunty male with an equally jaunty female.



Above the gender buttons are the buttons to adjust skin shade: three hands that from left to right signify Light, Medium and Dark. The default is Light; click on either of the other shades to paint your Sims' skin in increasingly rich shades of color.



Above the buttons to adjust skin shade are buttons to choose whether your Sim is an adult or child. When you click on the Child button, your adult Sim shrinks into the body of an active adolescent. You can choose to populate your household with children, but you might want to start out with just one or two adults, since they can generate income, and won't be clamoring for a candy bar every nineteen seconds.



The appearance window itself has some nice tricks for transforming your Sims. Clicking on the top directional arrows cycles through a set of heads to adorn your selected Sim body. The bottom directional arrow cycles through a number of outfits to make your Sim the fashion plate (or plate of leftovers) that best serves your inclinations.



After you put together the designer Sim (or FrankenSim) of your dreams, give him or her a name worthy of your body sculptings by typing it in the blinking text box at the top of the screen.

PERSONALITY: SAINTS AND MONSTERS

The Create A Sim window is no slouch when it comes to unprecedented power: Not only can you build a Sim body, you can build a Sim mind as well. On the window's left side is the Personality box, and its simple tools have a wealth of implications for how your Sims behave in the game. Here is where you assign the traits, the idiosyncrasies, and the neuro-mappings that make up your Sim's disposition. Of course, you can also leave it to the stars and let the Sim's astrological sign guide their personality setting.



These character assignments induce your Sim into a wide range of actions and reactions in their households. For example, Sims blessed with an interest in neatness are appalled to see the kitchen piled with dirty dishes; Sims slanted toward disorderliness blithely stroll around any such blights, and happily make more. You can explore the finer distinctions for these choices in the Soul of a Sim section (page 37).

The Personality window has five categories: Neat, Outgoing, Active, Playful and Nice. You can begin tampering with your Sim's nature by bringing the cursor into the black box on the left side of the screen. Below that box is a "points bin" with 25 points that can be assigned to whatever trait combination you choose to compose your Sim's character.

The points are measured increments that increase the degree or "personality influence" of the selected trait. Decreasing the number of these points naturally decrease the power of that trait in your Sim's character. Though the "opposing" traits of the designated traits aren't named, they are essentially opposites: Nice/Grouchy; Active/Lazy; Neat/Sloppy; Playful/Serious and Outgoing/Shy.

Bring your cursor into the 10 bars next to a trait; the cursor changes to a plus sign next to trait designations that can have points added. Click your mouse to add single points to the bar total. If you bring the cursor into the filled bar area, the cursor changes to a minus sign, indicating that clicking subtracts those points and returns them to the hopper for use in other traits. You can even create a character and leave some points in the hopper, but you are warned that they are still available for use.



You can skew the traits so you make a very messy grouch, or a very playful neat-freak, or some such weebegone combination. As you might assume, the trait designations are balanced by their opposites: Less Neat, more Sloppy; less Outgoing, more Shy; less Active, more Lazy; less Playful, more Serious; less Nice, more Grouchy. You might try to make a pair of same-household Sims whose traits are very different, or perhaps Sims whose combined interests make up for individual failings. Or you could test your match making skills by setting up a household filled with Libras, Aries and Scorpios and watch the fur fly.

If you click on the astrological sign name under the Personality points, the traits for that sign are automatically filled in. Or, you can always do it yourself and see what sign shakes out of your Personality points assignment. In brief, the astrological signs are a quick way to set up compatible family members (or a clutch of completely incompatible combatants for all you wrestling fans).

It's essential you realize these choices can very much affect gameplay: For instance, a character skewed toward very Grouchy is more difficult to socially engage with other players, and may make relationships challenging. However, just as in human life, these are the kinds of challenges that make life interesting. And miserable as well. Here's to interesting misery!

BIOGRAPHY AND GOODNIGHT

Once you come up with all those curious components that make up the measure of a Sim, you can add a little biographical note for posterity. This can be seen when you click on the noted head in the Select A Family window, and also when you click on the head in the Relationship panel, if this Sim's lucky enough to have any relationships. Click in the area under the word "Bio" and set your character's history in stone—well, maybe in bytes.

Once you put together the angel or demon of your desire, click on the Done button to return to the Create A Family window, where you can consider designing a counterpart for the original householder you created. While there, you can also click on the icon for the

character you just created, and send him on to character actor's hell (never to return) by clicking on the Delete Selected Sim button. Or you can re-edit your selected Sims' characteristics by clicking on the Edit Selected Sim button, which returns you to the Create A Sim window. You can create a maximum of eight characters per family.



Clicking Done in the Create A Family screen is really the done deal: **You won't be able to go back and edit your creation, period.** If you just made the Slop Monster, you're (well, probably another Sim will) just gonna have to live with him. Or with the Slop Mistress.

If you click the Cancel button in this window, all of your choices are deleted and you return to the Select A Family window to begin again. Once you clicked Done, you return to the Select A Family window, where you can use the Move In Family button to send your charges out to make their way into the world. Check the Welcome to the Neighborhood section for what to do when you're ready to make the big move.

CHARACTER-BUILDING CONSIDERATIONS

There are many strategies for achieving personality balance in households, though as we've suggested, perhaps balance is less interesting than crisis peaks and doldrum valleys. Test out the various combinations to discover the subtleties behind their aggregates, and of course to exercise your diabolically manipulative nature.

But unless you want your manipulations to have you sweating into your keyboard, it might be best to just run a one- or two-person family for a while, or at least until you feel like your Sims are purring rather than puking every time you tickle them with the mouse. It is quite challenging to manage households of more than a few members, and if you attempt the really high household counts (between six and eight), you're probably no longer eating right or bathing in your real home. (You can still tell the difference between your real home and your Sims' home, right?)

The Soul of a Sim/Daily Life section elaborates on how personality affects gameplay, and provides some tips on how you can best manage these creatures you've given electronic birth to. If at times it seems your Sims have twisted their lives into a torturous tangle, just be thankful they don't have access to your credit cards.

LIVE MODE: THE SOUL OF A SIM

What makes a Sim tick? (And what sometimes makes these ticking bombs explode?) As any glance at the Control Panel tells you, Sims are creatures of many moods, of many appetites. Those moods are a result of situations occurring in their lives, filtered through the composite of their personalities. (Check out the Daily Life information, page 44, for the blow-by-blow on what moves a Sim, and what moves you can make to move a Sim).



Now, you don't have a lot of room to object to those personalities—you made 'em, point by point (though you're excused for the pre-made families). Understanding those personalities is a different matter, of course. This section of the manual gives you both the practical and the philosophical in regards to understanding your Sims, and attempts to answer the question Freud would have posed if he were alive today: What do Sims really want?

MOTIVES, NEEDS AND PERSONALITIES

Sims are motivated by needs: A hungry Sim is motivated to eat, a tired Sim to sleep, and on down the line, as represented by the Needs states seen in the Control Panel. (You can toggle the full subpanel displays of the Control Panel by pressing the F1 key). One of your central concerns in Sim management is to make them happy through sound Mood management. Their happiness is the key to moving them forward in life, expanding their opportunities and chances for new experiences and relationships. And it can make you feel like you're an insightful, responsive, creative human being, ever so pleased to buy more Maxis games that confirm your suspicions.



The Mood bars above and below the mood button reflect an average of all the other Needs states. Actually, those bars reflect a concatenation of various mood conditions and

attributes, filtered through a fiendishly complicated computing formula reflecting the grandiose sophistication of the game. Suffice it to say, more green bars indicate increased happiness; more red bars imply an increasingly unhappy Sim.



MOTIVES

Here is a list of Sim needs, and some of the means to fulfill them. You can get basic information on fulfillment by clicking on each need's category text (and indeed text and bars in all of these Control Panel subpanels) to see an information box. Experiment with your Sims to see how their behaviors are affected by current mood, environmental conditions, and the tasks to which you set them. Patterns develop that you can use to fine-tune their progress. But beware, Sims have many similarities to the people we know—just when you think you have them figured out, they toss your thoughts for a bruising loop.

Hunger

The Hunger motive is fulfilled by preparing food or snacks, calling for pizza, and then eating. Or by eating food prepared by another Sim.

Comfort

The Comfort motive is fulfilled by sitting, sleeping, taking a bath, and napping.

Hygiene

The hygiene motive is fulfilled by bathing, in either the shower or the tub, or washing hands in a sink.

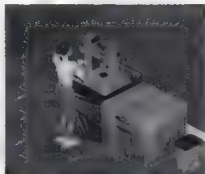


Bladder

The Bladder motive is fulfilled by using the toilet. (No peeing in the bushes).

Energy

The Energy motive is fulfilled by sleeping and by drinking coffee. Your Sims get a little more kick from drinking espresso. Of course we're talking about your adult Sims here; your Sim children undoubtedly prove maniacal enough without giving them any coffee connections—they don't drink it.



Fun

The Fun motive is fulfilled when a character is entertained by something: TV, stereo, a pinball machine, a pool table, etc.

Social

The Social motive is fulfilled by interacting with other Sims.



Room

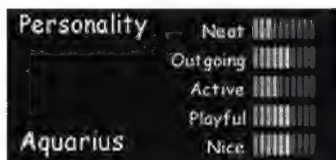
Sims like big rooms with lots of light. Windows help during the day and lamps are good at night. Decorations and landscaping bring this score up, but broken items, dirty dishes or trash brings it down.

DO YOUR SIMS GET WHAT THEY NEED? DO THEY NEED WHAT THEY GET?

Satisfying basic needs is elementary in some ways, more complex in others. It's easy to understand when a Sim's Bladder need is glaring red, it's best to send them to the bathroom, not the bar. You can take a simply mechanical route to Sim satisfaction by trying to keep a good, green-tending Mood balance among all the needs, never letting any of them get to desperate levels. Of course, that's easier said than done, particularly when dealing with bigger households and sparring social interactions between Sims of variant personalities.



Personality is an influential component of need satisfaction. For instance, if a Sim is heavily weighted in Playful personality points, they might get a lot more pleasure from playing a game on the computer than by reading a book.



Sims get the most gain from “high-quality” objects: That is, a small TV is less efficient at entertaining than a large TV. To put it in more analytical terms, in order to maximize the efficiency of each Sim, it's necessary to find out how to make them happiest in the least amount of time. Some interactions with objects result in very different Needs effects, or reactions, from Sims of differing personalities. The lesson is you must intimately know your Sims in order to direct their actions toward the best Needs-meeting course.

Part of knowing your Sims well is in directing them toward obtaining and using these high-quality objects. Your motivation for buying better things is strategic: You want your Sims to make more money so they can get more objects that more easily or efficiently fulfill their needs. Those better household objects make better (or perhaps more content) household Sims—get 'em working and get 'em shopping.

Objectively Speaking

Let's look at a few object interactions and the variant Sim reactions to them. Say you're that modern type that thinks a Sim should be wired, so you buy them a nice computer. Sims can use the computer for playing or looking for jobs, though they only look for jobs if you instruct them to do so—and they have to be in a good mood to job-hunt. They play on their own—whether they play more or less is dependent on their personality type and mood.



Playful Sims play longer at the computer game than a serious Sim. A grouchy Sim might throw a temper tantrum if the computer crashes. Some objects are much more attractive to certain Sims (such as the TV to a lazy Sim), and in some instances they derive more motive (Needs) points from interaction with it.

However, at another time your ever-mood-dependent Sims would only get the same amount of motive points as another Sim with a different personality. Keep in mind your Sims are individuals, with specific interests and motivations weighted differently at specific times. Personalities affect the choices they make as to which objects to use and how long to keep using them.



These kinds of object interactions and the Sims' personality variances tell you that you must know your Sims in order to keep them mentally and emotionally fit (and to jump forward into the deeper complexities—and pleasures—of the game). And knowing them covers the entire Sim universe, from knowing what objects to buy them to best suit their temperaments, to the placement of those objects so they're best utilized. Whew! And you thought this was just a game.

Room to Move

Some motivations might seem a bit more obscure than others. For instance, the Room motive is fulfilled by having large, architecturally interesting rooms with many windows. Room satisfaction goes up, for example, if there are paintings on the walls and plants in the room, and goes down if there are piles of trash or dirty dishes in the room. Sims are sensitive to atmosphere and aesthetics, though Sims who are slanted toward the sloppy side of Neat won't react nearly as negatively to a pizza box-strewn room.

A general point about objects: Some objects have a maximum point limit, meaning that a Sim with a very high Fun motive might not get a complete fulfillment from playing with a certain object that might deliver another Sim skyward to Fun heaven. We're not going to tell you which ones, of course—it's a learning experience.

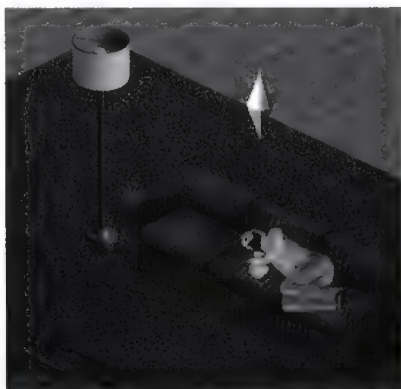
AUTONOMY

The characters in the household do have their own ideas on how to conduct their lives, and do act on them, if you don't tell them what to do. See the Play Options material in the Control Panel section for information on Free Will (page 23). The autonomous action appears as an icon in the interaction queue of a selected character, just as a user-directed one would. Those autonomous actions are interrupted and superseded by yours, because after all, you paid money for this game. See the Queuing Up section (page 47) for information on how the queue process works.

THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT

The autonomous Sim does not always choose the wisest lifestyle choice from moment to moment. Sometimes it's a choice between potato chips or the exercise machine, and who's kidding who? You, of course, know better than that durned Sim, so be ready to take action when a Sim starts to slack.

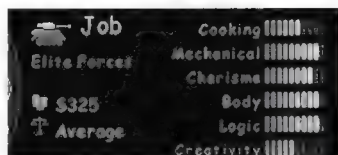
The autonomous character follows personality traits to the extreme. So, a Sim with a leaning toward lazy demonstrates some pretty obvious expressions of that trait: They'll do a lot of the couch-potato boogie, and get into some heavy sessions with the boob tube—even at the expense of their hunger or their hygiene. If their personality centers on one trait, all the other motives bow to it. It can get ugly.



It's those finely tuned Personality settings that you chose for your creatures, moderated by the objects you surrounded them with that determines what they do on their own. In other words, if you bought them a bed, they might lie in it on their own (but you have to tell lazy Sims to make it).

SKILLS

Sims need enhanced skills in order to qualify for career promotions, and to avoid embarrassing things like burning down the kitchen while cooking dinner. You can see their current skill levels by clicking on the Job button in the Control Panel. (Children display a report card rather than a skills list). There are a number of means to augment your Sims' skills; the chart here lists skills and improvement methods. Remember, they can't read those skill-enhancing books without you buying them bookcases. An added benefit: Some of the skills-enhancement means are also fun for the Sims, and **can raise their moods**.



Some Sims skills are rapidly improved by studying related books. Those bookcases aren't just for decorations—your Sims should cultivate the contemplative life with careful selections from the bookshelves you carefully placed in their homes. Kids do better in school with study sessions from the bookcases. However, other skills require other objects; you can't improve all Sim skills through a nice library.

The chart here looks at some means to enhance skills. Look at the Careers material in the

Daily Life section for elaboration on skills and their applications.

SKILL	METHOD OF ENHANCEMENT
Cooking	Reading cookbook from bookcase
Mechanical	Reading mechanical book from bookcase
Charisma	Put a mirror in the house and watch Charisma grow
Body	Swim or work out on exercise machine
Logic	Play chess
Creativity	Painting and playing the piano

DAILY LIFE—IT'S A LIVING, AIN'T IT?

Who hasn't passed by a house in a neighborhood and wondered what goes on behind those nearby walls? *The Sims* gives you the chance to be more than a mere voyeur—you get to actually direct the course of your Sims' lives, nudging them in the direction of new skills, tickling their funny bones, and releasing Cupid's arrow when a fine opportunity for flirtation arises. (And sometimes cleaning up the mess when that arrow misses the mark). Every day in a Sim household is chock-full of change and challenge.

The lives of your Sims are event-packed, so much so that sometimes you might send them off to sleep when they aren't even tired, just so you can get a break. Before you jump right in and put TVs in every room, you might want to look at the big picture first. From the outset of your Sim strategizing, there is a broad concept to consider: Time management. Even in the early stages of your household's development, even before careers are considered or relationships flourish or founder, you have to manage how your Sims spend their time. (And there are times when you want them to work, but they gotta dance).



A good watchword to keep in mind in this management is *efficiency*. You want your Sims to accomplish their goals—whether those goals are getting a raise or getting to the bathroom—in the most efficient manner. If you see a Sim's mood is plunging because they're very hungry, it's probably not the right time to try to engage that Sim in idle conversation with a neighbor. That might make the hungry Sim's mood go sour, the conversation goes south, and the Sim's chances of a sound relationship with that neighbor can be harder to establish.

Since relationships with neighbors are the means to many ends, such as lifting social moods, starting romantic relationships, and potentially adding that neighbor (and their assets) to a household, it's very inefficient to hinder relationship growth by promoting it at an unfavorable time. Of course, if you think your Sim is in the mood to insult the neighbor, that's another matter. Your Sim's mood counts too, inefficient as it may be.

That example plays out in a myriad of ways, from moment to moment in a household. However, it's probably not as fun if you just do everything perfectly, having well-adjusted Sims with always-made beds engaging in polite conversations at the dinner table—how can anyone relate to that? But just keep in mind that if you keep the moods and motions of your Sims in balance, so that they manage to include in their busy days some of the things that make them progress in life, they have more interesting opportunities and a broader range of behaviors. You have more to look at, ponder, and play with. (And you can still insult a neighbor or two).



ENGAGING A SIM IN ACTIVITY (IT'S OBJECTIVE, MY DEAR WATSON)

If you had the good sense to play the tutorial game, you understand the basics of getting your Sims to do your bidding, and know how to look over the Needs panel to send them off in the right direction. Just a little reminder: From the beginning, you have to be conscious of one singular fact regarding the Sims' world: Their world is one of interactions with objects, whether those objects are other Sims, plants, or lava lamps. Therefore, when you request that a Sim perform an action, you really are requesting that an object have a particular action performed upon it by a selected Sim.

Objects are the items that move the Sim along: From the bathroom to the boardroom. Send your selected Sim to the refrigerator object to eat by clicking on that refrigerator in question and picking an eating action from the pie menu. Send your Sim to the bookcase to read (and further their Sim career skills) by clicking on that bookcase and choosing a study selection. Keep 'em moving and keep 'em grooving—except at bedtime, of course. The object obsession is easy, but essential.

So, your moves within your household are predicated on you choosing an object for Sim attention. Once clicked on, that object displays the pie menu of possibilities for the Sim in question to perform upon it. And remember, even if there is only a single choice in the pie menu, you have to select that choice with your mouse to make it happen. Some of those pie options might not be the sensible choice, if you're looking for your Sims to make sense. We're sure you'll steer them in the right—or at least the most interesting—direction.



The active Sim in any scenario is the one with the spinning selection indicator, the diamond-shaped arrow above his or her head. All objects selected for action have the actions performed by that Sim. In second-story homes, you can even see that moving arrow through the second-story floor as the selected Sim moves on the floor below. That arrow's color is also indicative of the Sim's mood: It changes from gentle green to bruised red as their temperament moves from contented to cranky.



That chosen Sim is also highlighted in the face gallery in the Control Panel. Naturally, to get a different Sim to do your bidding (and to see their information in all the subpanels), you just have to click on their face in the gallery, or just right-click directly on the Sim in question. You can also toggle between Sim selection in a household by hitting the spacebar. And if you have a pie menu of choices open on an object, but the wrong Sim is selected to deal with that object, you can just use this spacebar toggle to get the correct Sim cracking.



If you really want to track a Sim, just right-click on that Control Panel gallery face. A red cross-hair appears on the face icon. Until you click on another, there is a moving camera on that cross-hair Sim as he or she travels through the house. (Note: this doesn't mean that it's your selected Sim to perform an action—you can track with the Sim being selected). You can review any of the subpanel information readouts for other Sims by clicking on their faces in the gallery, and your tracked Sim remains tracked.



And a couple of other clickety-pops: If you click and hold on a character, the character's bio, which you composed in the Create A Sim window, or which was composed for you by the sensitive geniuses at Maxis[®], appears. If you think the bio needs a little refreshing, just Control-click on the character in question, and get that bio in an editable dialog box for your red-pen pleasure.

QUEUING UP

You can see when you assign an action to a Sim, an icon for that action appears up on the left-hand side of the screen. If you roll your mouse over the queue icon, you get a tooltip

on what that action is. You can command your Sim to perform up to eight consecutive actions in a queue—you could make them change clothes eight times, if you have a compulsively fashion-conscious Sim on your hands.



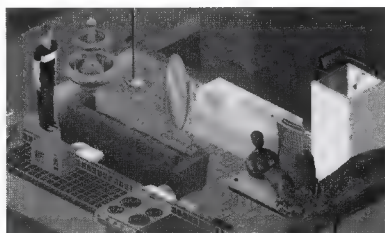
You can cancel out of a pie menu action choice by clicking the right mouse button or by clicking away from your Sim's head, off of the available actions. Some more urgent actions, like a house fire, may cause a Sim to literally drop whatever they're doing, like their breakfast, to go attend to the new action.

You can delete actions in the queue, if you change your mind. Just click on the action and it disappears; if there are subsequently queued actions, they move into the open chronological slot. You can delete commands that are actively being performed, designated by the yellow highlight around their icon. The action stop doesn't happen immediately, but deleting an active action shortens the length of time the action is performed (though if you're late with your deletion clicking on a short-timed action, that action might be completed anyway). However, for a long action, such as taking a bath, deleting the bath icon would mean they get out of the tub faster, if a little dirtier.

Autonomous actions also appear in the icon queue, and even if active, they can be superseded by your commands, you wielder of power, you. (There is only one autonomous action in the queue at any time).

If your Sims can't complete the action you decree—say a newly bought but poorly placed chair blocks the path to the bathtub for their ordered bath—the queue icon, and its control over your Sims, soon disappear. If you send them to take a shower while another Sim is showering, the command might “time out”—and you might see a discomfited unshowered Sim as a result. Besides the Sim grumbling, the offended Sim often displays a little “alert” balloon that pictorially describes the problem.

If you don't happen to have the best Martha Stewart sense of home design, you might find behaviors you give to your Sims can't be performed because something's in the way, or maybe you did something clever like rotate the refrigerator so its doors face the wall. As you can imagine, they tend to act a tad frustrated when that happens. In fact, if they have to go the long way around to get anything done, their moods sink a bit. Think efficiency!



SIMTHINK

Your Sims don't wear their emotions on their sleeves: Nah, they'd rather show them off in thought balloons, or maybe in a well-choreographed tantrum. Actually, thought balloons don't necessarily display emotions, but they express what the Sim is interested in doing next, and also very much what interest is truly pressing upon them, like the insistent pressure of a full bladder. A Sim thought balloon has a scalloped edge, like a "funny papers" cartoon balloon.

When Sims are conversing, the topics trafficked are displayed with a smooth-edged conversation balloon (and when topics get run over by the receiver, the universal "No" symbol through the subject appears). And your Sims also give clear voice (if not in your native language) to their moods: They tend to grumble when they're feeling sour, and they do some singing when everything's going great.

Needs Arrows

You can see a real-time (well, a Sim-time) tracking of how your selected Sim is feeling in regards to current activities. The best interactions or actions display five green right-facing arrows on the affected motive, the worst, five red left-facing arrows. The arrows remain onscreen for a delayed amount of time after the end of the interaction so you can go to the Needs subpanels to see the results. Lesser degrees of Needs reactions to the objects have fewer arrows—your Sim receives some Comfort from resting on the couch, but much more from snoozing in the bed.



CHARACTER CONVERSATIONS

Conversations allow Sims to modify their relationships with each other and to satisfy their social motive. It's a good thing to send your Sims into conversation with their fellows, though the results aren't always positive. Conversations work something like this: Smoothie Sim proposes a topic (seen as a topic conversation balloon) to Slippery Sim. Slippery needs at least some interest in the topic in order for the conversation to proceed. If it proceeds, Slippery responds with either the same topic or a different one.

Each Sim has unique interests: Chemistry happens in part because talking Sims happen to have the same interests. You can learn more about your Sims by observing what they like to talk about with each other. Sims who don't share any interests have a hard time keeping a friendship going. If your Sim wants to chat about garage sales to a Sim thinking sailboats, they're not going to be chatting for long.



And we know that you do like to feel you're the master manipulator, but your Sims get some breaks: You're not going to get any chances to control what they talk about. They might talk about sailing, they might talk about socks. They might talk about you.

Both Slippery and Smoothie can gain relationship points from their conversations, depending on how they're received and then received in turn by the other party.

(You see these exchanges are duly noted as positive or negative: The talking Sims also display some positive green plus signs when the conversation's looking up, and some negative red minus signs when they're getting nothing but the nasties from the discussion).

Conversations can continue for several rounds of speaking and listening, until some other Sim need takes precedence, or you decide to intervene.

The Telephone: a Conversational Power Object

The telephone can play a pivotal part in social progress for your Sims. They can use it to call friends and invite them over, contact the pizza deliverers, and call for household help if they're too busy for such mundane tasks. At the risk of mind-numbing repetition—relationships move this game along, and the phone can be an aid in their promotion. (If you're not getting the hint: Buy a phone, now!)

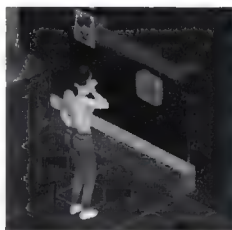
When you send a Sim to make a call by clicking on the phone, the pie menu possibilities display the last names of family friends and a Services choice. Clicking on a family's name displays all the names of that household that the caller knows. Move your cursor over the name to get a "Call XXX" command. If the callee answers the phone (they could be at work, or even already visiting), an onscreen dialog appears giving your calling Sim the chance to Invite the callee over. And the callee might suggest bringing over a friend, if you really want to jump up on the social ladder. (Unless you're serving catfood canapés).



Friends are organized by Relationship points, as seen in the Relationship panel. Other characters in the game that your phoning Sim has met appear on the calling friend's list. Friends without phones can't be called, so when you play those households, buy them one. **Did we mention you should buy every family a phone?** Hey, they cost less than a piano.



Invitees can decline the invitation if they've got something better to do, or if they're not interested in socializing with your Sim. Phone invitations have these similarities to face-to-face conversations: If the invitees are feeling favorably disposed toward the caller, they briskly make their way over. If either of the conversing Sims are sour toward the other, the invitation is declined. And if your Sim thinks 3A.M. is a good time for a chat, a hung-up phone might inform him otherwise. Some Sims are simpletons after all.



And don't just let a ringing phone ring—your Sims can get all kind of special offers if their feet are fast and their ear willing. Sims don't have an answering machine—tell them to answer that ringing phone.

Service Calls

Some of your Sim's appliances can just up and stop working. Or maybe you designed some Sims that are cussedly sloppy, and you're tired of having to tell them to flush. There is a solution: Let your mouse do the walking. You can direct your Sims to use the phone to call maids, gardeners, and repair people, through the Service pie menu choices. And they can get another pie choice there: Pizza pie.



You can even get your uniformed authorities to come, but you get a cash reprimand if you're just crying wolf: You are charged for a false-alarm fire. Police come on the double if a Sim spots a burglar and gives the cops a call. Calling them without any burglar to pinch gets your Sim a scolding.

Repairing things can be pretty dicey for clumsy Sims—better rely on the professionals. You can also schedule regular gardening service; unless you direct your Sims to care for your plants, they wither and die. Of course, some Sims find gardening rather soothing.



Maids arrive dressed to kill, and they kill spills on a daily basis; gardeners twiddle their green thumbs once every three days. Most of the Service calls are followed by dialogs giving the particulars of the arrangement, and allowing you to cancel out if desired. And Sims can fire the maid (through the pie menu), if they suspect she's reading their mail. But don't ever expect a sloppy Sim to change his stripes—they always need dry cleaning. The charges for the rendered service are deducted when the serviceperson leaves after the task is finished. If you evict Sims and move them to another house, they have to reestablish services there.

FRIENDS AND LOVERS

Sims, just like their human counterparts, relate to each other on many levels; two of those significant levels are attained through friends' relationships or lovers' relationships. Your Sims get Social Needs points from many types of encounters with other Sims, whether between household members or householders and neighbors. But romantic interactions add more Social fulfillment points than other interactions. And if you're the voyeur type, they're all kinds of fun. (No, you don't get to see them doing that!)

The relationships between friends are different from those of lovers in that one Sim can have fully romantic inclinations toward another without reciprocation. With friends, both parties must be agreeably slanted toward one another. It's a mutuality thing. Friendships can slowly decay over time—you have to work to maintain your Sim friendships. If a Sim is getting close to losing another Sim as a friend, you get a message that your Sim is going to lose that friend if some serious socializing isn't done.



Romance between Sims can occur if they're feeling well disposed toward one another as well. (Check out the Relationships subpanel in the Control Panel). When things are heating up a bit between Sims, the pie menu choices begin to include a few means of pitching woo.

Of course, as in our woeful world, relationships can be romantic one-way, where one Sim is a mite more eager than the other. You might send a Sim to initiate a romantic interaction without the object of the attention being up to the "ready level." One Sim sitting on the couch with another might be much more interested in checking out the TV than checking out the other's chemistry.



Consider just how touchy a personality can be: Shy Simmee might not warm up to Swingin' Simster if Sluggo Sim happens to be around. And some Sims might not be hot to go if the room has pizza boxes strewn everywhere. (But then again, love is a mystery, extra cheese or not). And autonomous love actions can happen all on their own.

These differences in Relationship values make for intrigue, because a romantic interaction may be reciprocated (if the Relationship points are approximately equal) or may be flatly refused. If a refusal or rejection drives the selected character's relationship with the refuser to plummet, there is no more opportunity for romance until the Relationship value is kicked up again, and that can take some smooth talking by your rejected Sim. As is the case for most episodes in this world (and others), timing is everything.

Relationship scores can go to the max with or without a romance between characters, thereby reflecting the difference between best friends and lovers. (The Relationships panel always reflects the "point state" of the relationship, with heart and smiley face icons for romantic involvement and friendships). Romance does not affect relationship points; however, relationship points do affect romance, by making interactions possible or not.



Once a romantic relationship occurs, whether or not it is successfully reciprocated, a heart appears under the love object's face in the initiator's relationship panel. A romantic relationship decays over time just like all other relationships. Romantic relationships require romantic interactions to keep them going. Keep the love garden pruned. Our Sims aren't sappy enough to swoon twice over any wilted flowers some Sim cad gave them last Wednesday, you know.



Privacy

Romantic relationships can give a bit more flexibility in household actions as well. For instance, Sims well disposed toward each other romantically don't have any qualms about using the bathroom when their loved one is bathing. Oh, these modern couples!

However, "intruders" into other hygiene-related circumstances are asked by the moody, privacy-seeking Sims to leave, and pronto. The dependencies here are the relationships between the parties and their respective moods. Some of the same registers prevail for sleeping arrangements: If a Sim wants to sleep in a bed occupied by someone with whom they have a lousy relationship, the bed occupant issues a "get out" voiceover, and the sleep-seeker is sent packing heavy bags under their eyes. Sims with higher Relationships levels do sleep together.



These partner/sleep relationships don't apply to children. Children can sleep with an adult regardless of their relationship, and vice versa. Hey, these folks just want to get some sleep, ok?

MOVING IN

Getting other folks to move in might seem like an invitation to more lost socks in the laundry, but it really can enhance your household and move your game forward. The Moving In proposition is very similar to the marriage proposal, except that the preconditions are less restrictive, and it's available only for same-sex friends. Opposite-sex friends never have Move In available as a pie menu choice. Characters who move in to another household lose their last name and take on the names of the new household.

Here are the basics for mixing the Neighborhood nuts—we mean Sims—together. First of all, and pretty obviously, a neighbor has to be in a Sim's house for it all to happen. Both Sims must be the same sex, and they've both got to be in pretty good moods. Once that's cooking, the household Sim finds "Move In" is a pie menu choice when the visiting Sim is clicked on. So if you've got a situation where a couple of opposite-sex Sims are living together and you're looking for a neighbor to move in, you need to have the Sim that's the same sex as the neighbor be the one that extends the invitation.

The plot thickens: If the two Sims' relationship is good enough, the visitor accepts. Bingo, instant housemate! If the conditions aren't ripe, the visitor declines, and so do both parties' Relationship points. The person moving in doesn't require a specific amount of household Simoleons, so watch out for moochers.

If the Sim refuses the invitation, they tell you why: "Your place isn't big enough," or "We don't know each other well enough," or "I'm in a bad mood today."



So if Swingin' Sammy Sim happens to have a lot of dough and a few kids as well, when he's invited to move into Vivacious Vic Velvetsim's house, all of Sammy's assets and his children come with him.

What About the Rest of the Family?

As indicated above, the newcomer Sim can have a variety of prior home situations that determines what happens when he or she moves in: Household Simoleon assets are merged, a job (with carpool) is carried over to new home, and school bus pickup is carried over. To clarify other conditions and results: If Sammy was the only adult in his household, any kids in that house come with him. The same goes for any household dough. Sammy's money

comes with him if he's the only adult in his house. Otherwise, kids and cash stay with the old household, which still has at least one adult to manage them.

In those instances of single-adult houses now vacated, the house is emptied and is on the market for you real-estate speculators.

MARRIAGE

Your Sims do have some traditional romantic leanings: They can propose to one another, and if the mood's right, they can get married. In fact, they like it so much, they can get married to more than one Sim! (Remember now, this is the Sims' world, not ours. You might think these multiple marriages are an advantage, but think of all the additional junk-mail credit card offers you'd have to throw away).

Only opposite-sex relationships qualify for a proposal of marriage. Marriage is the only means to bring an opposite-sex character into the house to stay (i.e., male Sims cannot invite female friends to Move In). Either the male or female can be the proposer. The proposal happens in the home of the active character when the proposee is a guest.

Someone who is married or living with someone can go to a neighbor's house as a guest and accept a proposal from that neighbor. Marriage is a bit hazy in the Sims' world, and rather informal. It's an event, not a state. Cranky Sims can't request a divorce—they can just try another marriage. Anyway, you won't see any special symbols for married couples in the Relationship panel, just the standard Relationships rating between household individuals. It's all a state of mind, anyway, isn't it? You do get to see the ceremony though; garter belt tossing is implied.

Characters who move in to another household lose their last name and take on the names of the new household, whether that household is named for the lad or the lassie. Check out the Moving In section above for details on what happens to household assets and other variables for Sims who move into another household.

PROPOSING

Naturally, we aren't going to join together any old Sims who might be thrown asunder—they've got to care for one another. The Propose option is only seen in the pie menu under conditions of keen attraction: The proposer has to be feeling rather thermal towards the proposee—those heady high-relationship points of love. And the proposee has to be feeling pretty darn giddy in general.

If the timing's right, choose Propose from the menu—bring a hankie if you're the sentimental type.

Accepting a Proposal

The proposee swallows their pride and accepts a proposal—just kidding—if things are just so. The proposee has to be very well disposed, relationship-wise, to the proposer. Many backrubs down the line, as you might imagine. And of course, the proposee's has to be in a good mood, and everybody has to be feeling sociable. And if it's just not going to work, they can always order pizza.

For you more slanted to the practical than the romantic, you'll be happy to know that the bank account in proposer's house is increased through the addition of the proposee's worth.

Rejecting a Proposal

If a proposal is rejected because those blissful pre-conditions are not met, you can delight in some lovely rejection dramatics between the Sims with a consequent decrease in relationship and mood. The varying mood and relationship conditions between the Sims not-meant-to-be produces variant personal reactions and point consequences. Love ain't for amateurs.

POLYGAMY

An already hitched Sim may propose marriage to an opposite-sex guest who is in the house. (Maybe the proposer forgot he or she was already married). And your married Sims you know from certain houses can visit an active house and get married again. Hey, it felt good the first time. You won't see any direct game consequences from these multiple marriages, though it's anybody's guess how individual marriages might work out.



Wedding ceremonies are great social gatherings, and pretty much everyone agrees the marriage should take place, even among the already married. Sims do not turn down many party invitations.

BABIES AND SUCH

If you give your sexy Sims' batteries enough charge on the Romance scale (think passionate kisses), a dialog box appears letting you choose for them to have a baby. If you do play the stork, the resulting baby needs to be taken care of for three Sim days in order for it to mature into a child. That means some Sim in the house must put the baby to sleep and feed it in a regular fashion.

Remember, choosing not to have the baby does hinder household growth possibilities, and growth is a means of game progression. However, turning down the baby once doesn't mean it won't happen again—your Sims are pillars of fertility, after all. A while after a baby refusal, the baby choice situation can become an active possibility again. If your Sims do get the baby bundle, another small stretch of time must go by before the situation has a chance of coming up again.



Your Sims can't move the baby's bassinet, but you can, using the Hand Tool in Buy mode. And unlike most good kids, the baby can be seen and heard. You can't check on their Hunger or Energy needs like with other Sims—you have to rely on their cries to alert you to their needs. Babies won't appear in the family gallery, subpanels, etc. until they become kids.

The apple of their parents' eye indeed does grow to be a kid (and perhaps a rotten apple), but kids never become adults. And speaking of maturation, your Sim adults never get old—there are enough calamities that may befall them without wrinkles compounding the misery.

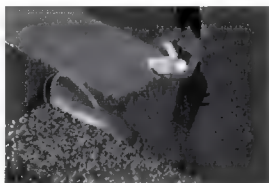
The baby's sex and personality is set at birth, and you can't edit it, but you get a chance to name the baby when it's born. (Hint: "Froglips," though descriptive, might not give the baby the boost forward in life that it needs).

INTERACTIONS WITH BABY

You are notified when that baby wants some attention—when you hear its cry, which increases with the degree of attention needed. Sims can autonomously play with the baby, but they can't autonomously feed or sing to the baby—that's up to you to direct them. Family members can interact with the baby in the following ways:

Feed

Feeding the baby reduces its hunger. The length of its feeding depends on its appetite. Feeding a baby that is crying because it's tired doesn't help get the baby to sleep. Wear earplugs.



Play

Playing with the baby can give your Sim a little boost on the Fun pole and the Social motive as well—and you hear the little baboo getting into it too. The baby doesn't get any hungrier if it's played with, thank the stars. House visitors can play with the baby as well.

Sing

If the baby is tired, Sim singing puts the baby to sleep, but it has to have had a bite or two, so it's not too hungry to listen. Singing to a hungry baby does nothing for its empty stomach, but maybe if your Sims do it long and loud enough, they might lose a pound or two.

The Sleep of the Innocent

Once asleep, the baby sleeps for a few hours, and it can't be woken.

Crying

The baby's cry wakes up adults sleeping in the same room. And if you want to make sure everybody's sleep is disturbed, have them all sleep where the baby does—they all wake up, except for kids.

LOSE THE BABY

If baby gets extremely hungry, this is a failure state. See the Failure States section (page 73). If the baby's hunger reaches this state, a social worker comes into the house and takes the swaddled baby away—shame! This situation can happen anytime (day or night) during the three-day babyhood period. The social worker is introduced with a dialog describing why she is there as she walks into door, but if your Sims are any kinds of parents at all, no explanation is good enough. (And you might not feel so hot yourself).

KIDS

Ah, the apples of their parents' eyes—we won't mention any rotten apples. After three blissful days of babyhood, a healthy baby becomes a kid. The parents are implied by whom the child lives with, but it is possible to move various adults around in households, with children ending up living with adults different than those with whom they started. Life is transition, after all. (Or maybe "It takes a village..."?)



ADOPTING A KID

Single adults and same-sex couples have the opportunity to adopt kids through an occasional onscreen dialog (the Great Adoption Agency in the CyberSky), but it's nothing you can plan on.

KIDS AND GAMEPLAY

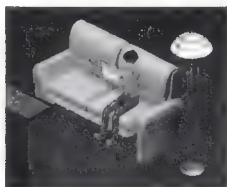
Kids are an integral part of gameplay, no matter how many times they don't clean up after a bath. (Not that they aren't matched by sloppy adults). They are very social, and their interaction with other neighborhood kids often leads to household interaction with those neighbor kids' parents. And the social exchanges taking place between neighbors can spark new relationships and career movements. Don't be paranoid about which kids your Sims' kids mess around with—it's all for the good of the game. When you get a chance to have a household kid play with other kids, go for it—good things can come of it.



Visiting kids that stay into the evening are often picked up by their parents. And if their parents haven't met the household parents, it could be the beginning of beautiful relationships. And tangled passions. And gameplay progress, you callous hound, you.

There are a host of social interactions possible between kids and kids and kids and adults. Kids can even care for babies. You can't get them to make their Sim parents coffee, however. They get bored and their moods swing, so dig into that pie menu and get those mini-Sims moving.

Kids are much like adults in their behaviors (dependent on their personality points, of course), though they tend to get hungrier faster. They don't acquire skills like their Sim parents, but they can clean (the question is, do they want to?). Even if they don't get a skill from something like reading, they do enjoy it. You've got to direct them to study for good school performance, either by reading from the bookcase selections or studying at the computer. And if you send them off to school in a bad mood, their school performance suffers. Things can get so bad that they might get sent away for good. Don't get any ideas now.



They don't have romances; believe us, you'll have enough problems.

NEIGHBORS

Sometimes the bane, sometimes the benefit, neighbors are a fact of life in our world, and a fact of life in the Sims' world as well. Your Sims can develop relationships with their neighbors that can move all the way from a few gains in Social points to them moving in, getting married, and producing new generations of Sims (and not merely with the ones they've first proposed to—these Sims can get around, if you know what we mean). At the very least, your neighbors can bring gifts.

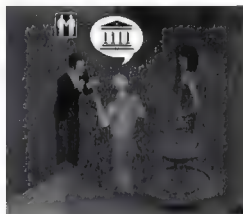
As you create new families and put them in houses, the characters in those families are available for relationships with characters in the other houses. (As you know, you can only play one household at once, but this is how the connections can be made). Once neighbors drop by and get acquainted they may, during subsequent visits, bring other family members with them. And as seen in the Telephone section (page 51), your Sims can always call and invite them over.



JEALOUSY

Just as in our tangled world, jealousy can occur between Sim characters who are living together or between Sims and their neighbors. The adults in the love triangle (one "love object," loved by two others) experience jealousy if they are in the room when certain social interactions take place between their love object and the other lover, and we're not talking about someone asking for the remote to be handed over. Check out this spicy example:

Sim Suzie loves Sim Cliff, but so does Sim Penelope. Our boy Cliff loves Suzie. Got your scorecard? Ok, Suzie plunks a little smooch on Cliffie—the relationship between Penelope and Suzie is going to take a quick dip, as long as Penelope was in the room to see such torrid action between Suzie and Cliff. (Why watch any drab soap opera on TV when you can watch—and manipulate—your Sims?)



There are many means, from polite kisses to passionate ones, from compliment to backrub, that are going to produce some jealousies and relationship plunges between any parties whose romantic moons are aligned. Try out some, and watch the sparks fly.

And, after the jealous person observes any one of these romantic interactions above, she or he might go to give the offending party a little jealous swat, resulting in further Relationship point loss between the battlers. If the jealous one is in the middle of running through a long list of queued interactions, tempers might cool down and no heads will roll. But there's always time for more after-work shenanigans, eh?

Kids, those wide-eyed innocents, don't get jealous.

MOVING OUT

You may have hoped it wouldn't come to this (or you may have planned it from the start), but Sim attacks can have permanent consequences. The Attack action is the last straw for the characters whose relationship has deteriorated to an extreme level. Sims that lose the Attack pie menu action with another household member may very well decide to leave. And they truly leave the Sim world and don't come back. Ever.

The greater the physical skill, the better the strong Sim's ability to win the attack. An attack interaction is available for children's relationships, but children losing an attack never choose to leave.



If you've managed your Sims so that there is a resulting Sim departure, a message appears letting you know you let some Sim relationships deteriorate beyond repair. It's not an encouraging development, so do try and avoid it. This ain't all-star wrestling, you know—Sim lives are at stake.

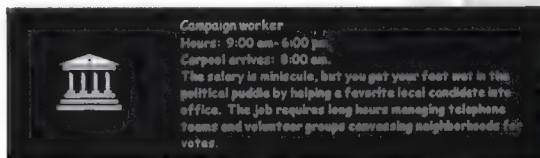
CAREERS

Your Sims could just wile away their time, watching TV, eating pizza, and dreaming of being able to afford a Fuzzy Logic Dishwasher, but how would that look to their children? And even if they don't have children, how can they ever leap to another station in life if the only stations they're concerned with are TV stations? They need careers, employment that steers their ambitions and directs some Simoleons back into the home.

HOW TO GET A JOB

There are a couple of means to move your Sims into the working world. One is by having them pick up the daily paper, which is soon delivered to your Sim household after it's up and running for a bit. Keep an eye out for the newspaper delivery (out by the mailbox), and send a Sim out to get it. Once that paper's brought in, one of the pie menu choices for it is Look for Job. Choose that option and a job description dialog appears, along with what the position pays.

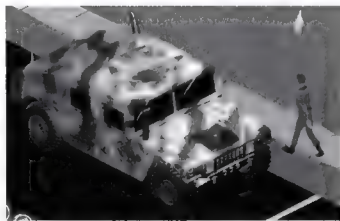
Your Sim only gets one job offer a day from the paper. You can have your Sim accept the position, in which case she or he has to be ready for the next morning's carpool, or you can turn it down and wait for another offer from tomorrow's paper.



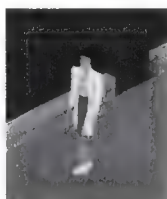
The other way for your Sims to enter the work world is via a little cyberhunting. If you buy them a computer, they can search for jobs online. In the case of computer job-hunts, you can have your Sim turn down different employment offers a few times in one session before you have to wait for another day's set of offers.

CARPOOLS

Your Sim needs to be up and at 'em when the carpool comes—and if you send them off to work hungry and with a full bladder, they are pretty ornery (and more hungry and more bladdery) when they return. Give them a break and get them up early enough to be ready when the carpool arrives. (You might notice that the shabbier jobs have some real beater cars—wheels have more polish with promotions).



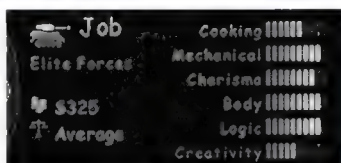
The carpool image appears in an onscreen PIP (check the Control Panel section, page 13) when it arrives and notifies you of its arrival with an impatient honk. Working Sim householders leaving for work at the same time can share the same car. If your working Sim doesn't get to the carpool in the generous allotted hour, it leaves. If they miss the carpool two days in a row, they've just lost their job (and talk might flow around the neighborhood about problems at home).



And a lost job is more than just a single albatross around a Sim neck. Any new work pursuits always start at the bottom of the ladder, no matter if your Sim was a skills superstar. The demoted Sims retain their skills, and they might help you move up in new career tracks where those skills are needed, but your fired Sim must again begin at entry level in the new position. They can't make any lateral moves into another career track (but a handy person still can repair the household appliances, fired or not). It's your basic "shoeshine boy with a Ph.D." kind of thing.

And if your Sim dislikes his work, he better not show it—bad moods at work can result in demotions, and worse moods, further demotions. Send your Sim off with a cheery soul and a "can-do" attitude, even if they are throwing darts at the boss' picture when the office door is closed.

Sims can miss alternate days of work without great consequence, though they won't get paid; maybe you could even have them study something to improve their skills if they miss the carpool. Since there are no weekends in the Sims' world (see how good you've got it?), you can give them a day off now and then. You can check on your Sim's job performance by clicking on the Job button in the Control Panel. The onscreen dialog lets you know the job is lost, plus a call from the boss if you do descend to those lowly depths. Just to rub it in, the Job subpanel says "Unemployed."

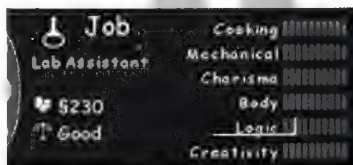


While your Sims are at work, you won't be able to tell them to come back and make the beds, or any other tasks. If there is a maid or other service people in the house, or if all the Sims are at work or school, game time is speeded up to Ultra, so you can quickly return to the captivating enchantment of their dynamic lives. When a Sim is at work or at school, their pictures in the family gallery has small icons at the lower right indicating their whereabouts. When they walk in the door from work (work hours vary with the job), they announce their arrival and how much money they made that day, which is added to the household assets.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT: SKILLS

Clicking on the Job panel for a Sim details the job, pay and performance levels of the Sim, as well as the Sim's various skill levels. Entry-level jobs require no skills. Certain jobs require enhanced skills, and if you give your Sims some incentive, they bring home the big bucks. Some of the career skills can be enhanced at home by also performing an action, i.e., working out with exercise equipment at home enhances Body skills, and promotions for careers requiring that skill would be more readily available.

You can see your Sims' skill standing by clicking on the Job button for the selected Sim. Skill totals are displayed as highlighted bars next to the designated skill. Skill areas relevant to the current position are underlined. In order for your Sim to get a promotion, they need to increase their relevant skill points to the position of the light-colored vertical bar connected to the underline. When they reach that next promotion level (and you see a promotion dialog), new underline/highlight bars indicate new promotional goals for the next job on that career track.



Some of those enhancement opportunities might not be so obvious—for instance, having a mirror in the home gives your Sim a chance to enhance their Charisma (by practicing public speaking and personal charm), which can improve their job chances. So do forgive your

Sims if they seem to spend too much time searching for pimples in front of the mirror—they're just ambitious. But they have to be in a good mood to work on skills.

A Sim's Logic skill can improve with chess playing. Playing the piano kicks up the Creativity levels. Eating pizza, well, eating pizza boosts the cholesterol levels. An onscreen dialog appears when your Sim has earned a skill point, and it is reflected in the Control Panel. Skills won't decline, unless your sorry Sim happens to get a random bad luck announcement onscreen.

Sims can, being the contrary creatures they are, work on any skills they want, even if their career doesn't call for it. Skill building of this kind is inefficient in gameplay terms, but you might make a Sim that can prepare a mean shrimp risotto. They won't work autonomously on those critical skill-building objects—by all means, direct them.

Having a generous number of friends is also a direct component of career advancement. (Hey, schmoozing is an art not to be taken lightly). So send your Sims to the bookcases, exercise their creative options, and make them glad-hand all their friends—network, network! If your Sim callously drops a friend or two, it won't affect their job standing, but it makes it harder to climb the career ladder, because that Sim has to make friends all over again. And if you're really a busybody, your Sims can have many, many friends. Who will make the guacamole dip?



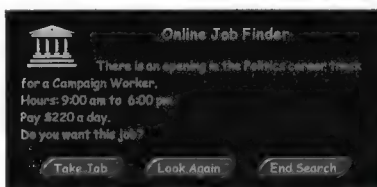
You can see just how many friends a Sim needs for advancement by clicking on the Job button in the Control Panel and looking at the bottom of the subpanel's readout. (It only appears if you need friends to advance). There is a number with a little smiley face indicating how many Neighborhood friends are needed to jump up the career track. There are friends and there are friends. Sims can have friends in their households which do appear in the Relationship panel, but the friends that can actually help move a Sim up the career ladder must be from Neighborhood houses.



Check out the Career Tracks information to see which path you might encourage your Sim to take. Employed Sims can switch career tracks, and any existing skills they've earned are retained. Remember, though, if you keep turning down jobs, no income comes into the house, and you'll never be able to afford the latest Dogbreath Chowder CD.

CAREER TRACKS

There are 10 different career tracks for your Sims, 10 different ladders to move up—or down, as the case may be. Keep your Sims in a good mood, catch those carpools, have them study within the particular discipline they are in, and watch them climb. Entry-level careers are offered at random from the newspaper and the computer, so you can try to wait out a desired track, but getting some ready money into the household is a big necessity to meet expenses, so don't delay the job decision too long.



Here are the career tracks, with entry-level positions for each track detailed, and the required skill enhancements. Your Sims can only move up from here—unless they get fired, of course. There are 10 positions within each track, and every Sim must start at the bottom, no matter how strong their jaw or high their heel. (And it might be lonely at the top, but at least the carpets are thick).

1. Business

Mailroom – Minimum wage, but you're on the ground floor of one of SimCity's mega-corps. Keep the copier and coffee machine in working order. Be organized, prompt, and friendly when you push that cart through the halls—maybe some sharp-eyed company officer will consider you for a kick upstairs.

Skills: Body, Charisma, Repair.

2. Entertainment

Waiter/Waitress – You're available for auditions, but can still make your tips at night. Good people-skills could get your picture and resume served along with the salad.

Skills: *Charisma, Body, Cooking.*

3. Law Enforcement

Security Guard – A badge, a gun ... and the graveyard shift. As you're required to supply your own firearm and uniforms, it doesn't leave much in your pay envelope. Also, you can't leave your post—which means your skills on the hot plate come in handy at meal breaks.

Skills: *Body, Cooking.*

4. Life of Crime

Pickpocket – Entry-level two-bit thief—but you are your own boss. Dexterity and physical speed are obviously important. A certain amount of charisma is helpful, too, if you are going to charm those marks before you dip into their coats.

Skills: *Body, Charisma, Creativity.*

5. Medicine

Medical Technician – Entry-level, low-paying grunt work in a big medical lab—but a way to test your aptitude and interest in exploring a doctor's world. Taking X-rays, logging samples, preparing test results are among your duties.

Skills: *Logic, Repair.*

6. Military

Recruit – Buzz cuts and boot camp. I don't know but I've been told, scrubbing latrines gets mighty old. Better maintain prime physical shape to advance from the trenches. Cooking and Repair skills also help you pass KP and cleanup detail to earn your stripes.

Skills: *Body, Cooking, Repair.*

7. Politics

Campaign Worker – The salary is miniscule, but you get your feet wet in the political puddle by helping a favorite local candidate into office. The job requires long hours managing telephone teams and volunteer groups canvassing neighborhoods for votes.

Skills: *Body, Creativity, Logic.*

8. Pro Athlete

Team Mascot – A young athlete has to start somewhere—even if it's sweating inside a cartoon animal suit. A very physical grunt job with lousy pay—but at least you can watch the game from up close. You are also expected to keep your suit in good repair.

Skills: *Body, Repair.*

9. Science

Test Subject – While earning a science degree, you're picking up a mediocre salary as a human guinea pig at a local kinetics lab. It's a way to introduce yourself to the scientific community, but it's tough to be charming after several hours in a wind tunnel.

Skills: *Body, Logic.*

10. X-Treme

Daredevil –You've turned a bar bet into the foundation of an extreme career. In short, you'll try anything, the crazier the better. Swim under the surface of a frozen lake, leap between rooftops with a bicycle, beat a train to a crossing, juggle a chainsaw while whistling "Dixie." Your workday is short, but intense.

Skills: *Body, Creativity, Charisma.*

DISASTERS

The life of a Sim is not a perfect one. Besides all those fluctuating moods, bothersome bladders and career pressures, there are some real problems to deal with, even some mortal problems. We want to break it to you easy, but your Sims are subject to all of the problems our cracked cosmos has to offer. Be prepared, and if you lose a Sim or two, you can always try whittling. Nah, just make some more.

FLOODS

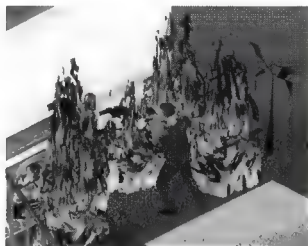
If the plumbing's shoddy at the house, or if it's not kept up, you could be in a world of woe. The toilet, sink and dishwasher can all break and start to flood, and that flood can turn into Noah's nemesis if you don't send your Sims to clean it up and try to get those appliances fixed or replaced. Better stay on top of it.



FIRES

Ah, isn't a fireplace a nice way to light up a living room? Well, it's also a nice way to BURN up a living room, as you might see. Some of your clumsier Sims aren't too swift with a pack of matches, and even asking them to light a fire is a risk. Fires can be VERY serious (see Failure States, page 73), so get those Sims to extinguish a fire immediately. You can double-up your adult Sims to put out a blaze, but kids can't handle the extinguisher.

Buying a fire alarm brings the fire department on the run when a fire starts, so it's a good investment. Then again, having a Sim wildly wielding an extinguisher is all kinds of fun too, if your interests lean toward the morbid.



BURGLARS

Just when you thought your Sims had the spiffiest household in the neighborhood, some pestiferous burglar comes and cleans it out. Yes, even in the nicest neighborhoods, there are stealthy characters that skulk about under cover of darkness. (And you'll be amazed at what they can stuff into that little bag). If you spot a burglar coming into the house, get a Sim to call the cops, pronto. If they're sleeping, it might be too late to rouse them, but you can try. Buying a burglar alarm brings the bluecoats in a hurry, though, and they'll catch that klepto.



FAILURE STATES

No household can be perfectly managed. Sims have some of the same inclinations we do. There's always somebody getting into trouble, making a mess, not eating right, playing computer games when they should be studying—what's a Sim caretaker like you to do? Well, much of the game progress depends on keeping your Sims in balance, efficiently managing their needs and moods. You've just got to pay attention (or send them off to sleep if they're really bugging you). But, if you don't pay attention, there can be consequences, some serious.

NO ENERGY

Sims can get very, very tired if you don't get them their rest. They start to slow down, sway and wobble. Eventually, they just drop down wherever they can to get some rest. Have a heart—send them to bed.



BLADDER

This is pretty basic: Everybody knows when they have to go, but some Sims delay until the very last moment—and then it might be too late. The consequences of that lateness ends up on the floor, and needs to be cleaned up. Save your Sims (and perhaps yourself) some embarrassment; send them merrily to the bathroom before you have to send their clothes to the cleaners.



DEATH

Yep, the big one: Your Sims can die. They can die through accident, they can die through neglect, but if they die, it's on your conscience (and don't call us to talk about funeral arrangements). Sims can die by being burned up in a fire, by electrocution, and by starvation. Fire is covered in Disasters above; electrocution can occur when clumsy Sims try to fix some appliances. Keep your Sims mechanical skills up, or take your chances.



Starvation is such a heinous way to die that we can't imagine that a sensitive soul like you would ever let one of your Sims take that ghastly route. Ok, accidents happen and all, but can't you corral that Sim into at least getting a minimum-wage job to keep that supply of snacks in the fridge?

Here are the consequences of a Sim death. The household autonomously mourns over the urn (or the tombstone, which the urn becomes if it's taken outside) that now carries the earthly remains of your Sim. After 24 hours, you can direct the mourning yourself. You can move the urn to a place of honor, or dishonor, if you like. If you're truly napping on the job, and let everybody in your household die (boy, let's hope you don't have any pets in your real house), the house will be available for sale in the neighborhood.



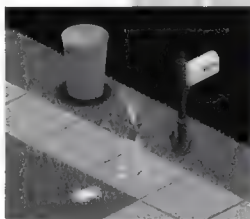
DELIVERABLES

Here are some items from the daily life of the Sims that help round out your information picture, and that let you know just how rich a life these ungrateful electronic mongrels—er, we mean, gentle creations of your creativity have.

The Newspaper

Your Sims receive a daily newspaper for their edification. The newspaper delivery person punctually makes the rounds on a daily basis. Using the pie menu choices, Sims can read the rag, or they can look for a job (unless they're depressed, of course—these are sensitive Sims).

If you choose Look for Job, a dialog box appears describing the job title, hours, and pay rate. If you think your Sim is ready for that flavor of the work world, you can click on Yes, and a resulting dialog box alerts you to the working terms and the time your working Sim is picked up by the morning carpool. Click No and you can always wait for tomorrow's paper's job opportunity.



If the Sim isn't punctual in picking up the paper, it just becomes trash that has to be cleaned up, and might be the lost opportunity for the career of a lifetime. Sims autonomously read the paper, and sometimes also enjoy it if you direct them to do so, if their moods are in sync with that kind of action. You won't get any more papers if there are five of them outside the house—and the neighborhood beautification committee might squawk too.

Mail

Sims get mail, just like any other schmo, and they suffer from it just like you—their mail contains the household bills, and they've got to be paid. Send your Sims out to pick up the mail and make them read it, or the Repo Man can come and take away the furniture (and we're not kidding). A warning alerts when bills are building up. Once brought inside, a Sim pie menu lets them pay the bills, and the debits are removed from your Sims' household assets.



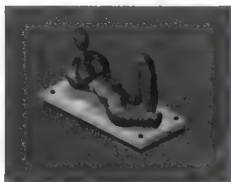
Since bills are based on the value of household objects, small houses with few possessions have smaller bills. Get those Sims into lucrative jobs, and you can line the wall with plasma TVs, and be the envy of the neighborhood.

WINNING THE GAME

Don't be absurd. This is a Maxis game! What's to win? You and your Sims can play unto perpetuity, getting them into all kinds of entanglements and trying to get them out. Before you know it, it'll be 3A.M. *your* time, and you don't even have your teeth brushed....

BUY MODE: FURNISHING YOUR WORLD

Your Sims, just like most folks, don't mind a nice item or two around the home—whether it's a piece of practicality or a guilty luxury. In fact, your Sims downright love many of their household items, and they let you know it (and unfortunately, they also let you know when some new addition doesn't measure up). There's an entire game mode dedicated to the display, purchase and placement of all manner of gewgaws and gizmos for your Sims, and that also covers those wares of a more necessary nature.



Some of the issues for the outfitting of your Sims' situations are fairly obvious. Just like you, your Sims have to eat, sleep, and—we must say it—excrete. You don't want them doing any of those things in an old shoe, do you? So, if you've got a sound sense of what might go in a kitchen, a bedroom, and a bathroom, much of that applies here. And they sometimes make do when you have to scrimp: You may notice them washing dishes in the bathroom sink if there isn't a dishwasher.

It's in the fine-tuning, experimenting with the furnishings that most efficiently move your Sims along, where it gets a little tricky. And we know there are times where you have to buy that pinball machine for the living room, even when your Sim family has no chairs. We'll just pretend to look the other way....

BUY MODE MAINSTAYS

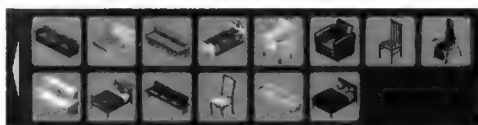
Buy mode is where those Sim cash registers go a ringing, and where you go slaphappy with purchasing pleasure. (And everything's *new*!) Enter Buy mode by clicking on the Buy mode button on the Control Panel. The game pauses in Buy mode, though you can still scroll and use the Zoom and other view tools. In fact, you should make liberal use of those tools when you're in Buy mode, because placement of your bought items is important for the promotion of Sim efficiency in use and movement.



Once in Buy mode, a series of icons appear that represent the eight item categories, and to the right of that, specific items within the selected category. All of the objects are sorted in two ways: By Room and by Function. Buy mode items sort by Function as a default; if you click on the Buy button again, items are sorted by the suggested Room of their placement.



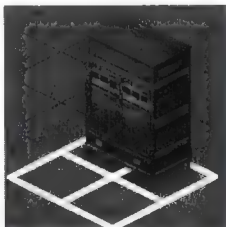
If you roll your mouse over the categories, an identifying tooltip pops up. For those categories with more items than can be displayed in one panel, clicking on the arrow at the right side of the item boxes takes you to the next series of items within that category. The arrow is now on the left side to return you to the initial items.



If you hover your cursor over a specific item, its price pops up in a tooltip. Clicking on an item brings up an information panel giving you the skinny on that item. Caveat emptor: Marketing scoundrels wrote some of those info boxes—they'll try to get you to buy anything.

MAKE IT YOURS

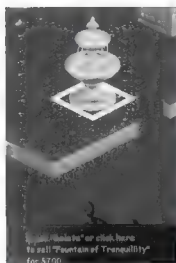
Besides bringing up the info panel, clicking on an item highlights it and—wonders behold!—attaches it to your cursor, ready to be plopped down in your Sim's castle. Notice when you move the cursor into your Sim world, the item tracks with it, in all its glory. The accompanying yellow highlight box tells you it's selected, a box you see when you click on other placed objects. If you move the item into an area where it cannot be placed, it has a distinct pinkish tint; attempting placement in those conditions result in a scolding tooltip.



You can place many items where you might not think they logically go. However, one of the beauties of Buy mode is that you can always come back in and rearrange the furniture. You don't want your plasma TV to be soiled by sweat when you buy all that fancy new exercise equipment. And if you want to place a few of the same items without having to return to the panel, just hold down the Shift key after you select your trinket—you can put 20 grandpa clocks in a row, if you've got time on your hands.

Placed objects that don't quite suit your style can be clicked again so that the selection highlight square is visible; reposition them by releasing the mouse button and dragging them to the desired position. Click again to secure them in their new spot.

Once an item is selected and brought into your Sims' home, you can place it by clicking the mouse button. If you've accidentally brought an item out from its category boxes, or if you merely brought it into the world to get a better look, you can release it from your cursor by bringing it anywhere back into the control panel and clicking. If you have placed it by mistake, you can simply click on it again, and as the panel now tells you, either click the Delete key or click in the panel to sell it back. Your cash total reflects any purchases and sell-backs.



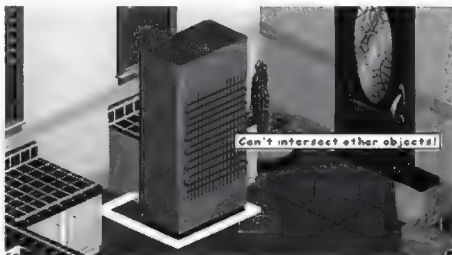
However, the more your Sims sit on that couch, the less it's worth at sale time. Depreciation only occurs in Live mode over game time, so if you sell any items early on, you get full price. Just flip those couch covers if your Sims have made greasy stains. Some items are actually of investment quality and can appreciate over time.

PUT IT IN ITS PLACE

Say you did want to put in a grandfather clock, or anything else—where to place it? As we said, you just move the cursor, click, and it's placed, but there's more to it than that. You don't want to place items that block doorways or inhibit the free movement of your Sims. Besides the budget-breaking possibilities, you have to consider which amenities might suit your Sims. Sims that are grumblers get more from solitary pursuits, like watching TV, than outgoing Sims, who would rather talk to each other than talk to the walls. After you've dealt with basic furnishings, there's family psychology to consider—you didn't think it was going to be easy, did you? Check out The Soul of a Sim section (page 37) for more ideas on those issues.

SWING YOUR PARTNER

Sometimes when you first place an item, it's positioned so it's useless. Refrigerators placed with their doors facing the wall, for instance, won't do much for your Sims' peace of mind, or belly. You are grateful, then, for the fiendishly clever rotation function we've built into item positioning. No, don't thank us, just click on the misplaced item with your mouse button depressed. Now the grabber-hand cursor becomes the rotation arrow.



As with many placement features, these functions are often easiest accomplished at the higher zoom levels, and with the room at its best rotation for clear viewing. With the mouse button held down and the rotation arrow visible, drag/swing your mouse in the direction you want the object to go. Objects move in 90-degree increments as you move the mouse. If you attempt a rotation into an area that can't accept the object, it will have the "can't place" pink tint. Once you've found that perfect spot, releasing the mouse button settles the item into place.

Click on the Live mode button to see what your Sims think of their new furnishings. Like certain wedding gifts, they might be given some household reverence; as for the others, your Sims might want to put them in the basement, if they only had one.

PURCHASE POINTERS

If you're just beginning a game in an unfurnished home, you need to cover the basics first. Think *eat, sleep, poop* and *polish*, and you'll be the great guardian angel your Sims deserve. So you want to buy a refrigerator, bed, toilet and shower, at the very least. Of course, your Sims won't be very comfortable standing around the kitchen eating, and some of them get a bit miffed if they have to throw all their trash on the dark floor. Details, details. Once you get those very basics placed, toss in at least one table and a set of chairs, some lamps, some living room furniture for resting, trash cans, counters, even the kitchen sink. Dishwashers are nice, too, of course.

And it goes on and on—Sims can't have any fun with furniture, can they? (Well, maybe they can get their jollies from a pool table or two). Select the things that amuse them, like TV, stereos, and toys. And a computer makes for both entertainment and career-furthering pursuits. And then of course, some artwork might boost the aesthetics a bit. What about a microwave? It can go on and on, and it does.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE

The wide-open acreage of the Sim shopping center is a credit-card buyer's dream. Well, you actually can't get credit in *The Sims*—but there are plenty of ways to get into money trouble, and we need to address those money-mangling matters. It's jolly fun to splurge in your Sim shopping, and equal fun to place items that are, shall we say, *unusual*, in some spots in your Sims' homes.

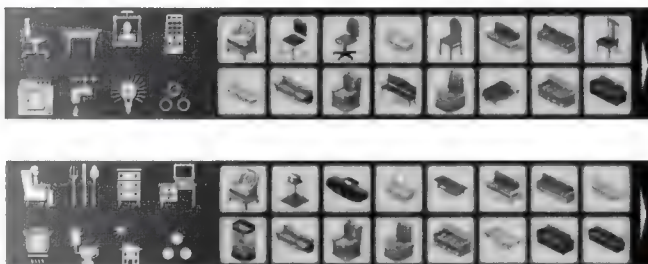
For instance, there is some architectural appeal in putting the hot tub in a living room, but those kinds of decisions have some consequences. It's expensive, it might prevent you from buying something that actually impels your game forward, and, in the case of the basketball hoop, you have to move it around too much if the Sims want to have a party.

We're just asking that you consider the consequences of your purchases. A row of fish tanks are very edible eye-candy, but they also mean you have to spend Sim energy feeding all those fish, and experience Sim sorrow when they die—unless you created very grouchy Sims. Then again, you might want to set up a household just for its architectural allure alone—who cares about the cussed game?

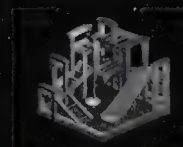


FOR SALE, BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

As mentioned, there are two sets of item category headings. Items arranged by Function, and items arranged by Room. The same items are found in either, but simply arranged under a differing category within each set. For instance, all manner of couches and chairs can be found under Seating when you are using the Function category, but they are found assigned to various areas, such as Living Room, Dining Room and Bedroom under the Room category.



There can be a wide variety of price and quality in the selections; check out the alluring marketing pitches on items by clicking on them. Note that each of the descriptions has a 1-10 Efficiency rating on it to let you know how effective that object is at fulfilling Sim motivational needs.



The Funinator Deluxe \$1,200

Fitness is a way of life. The Funinator Deluxe builds young muscles, motor skills and increases coordination and cardiovascular stimulation, which results in a healthy body and mind. Kids build self-esteem, learn goal setting and build camaraderie in a clean, drug-free lifestyle. Log bolted. Screw fastened. Headland Redwood.

Fun: 5

Can only be used by kids

Do feel free to make your living room look like Sonny and Cher's from 1968, but don't be surprised if your Sims would rather sit outside. And of course, even wacky wallpaper doesn't come cheap—your poor Sim's are going to have to pay for all that.



BUILD MODE: BUILDING YOUR DREAM HOUSE (OR SURVEYING YOUR NIGHTMARE)

Whatever your construction talents, whatever your architectural affections, the Sims' world can accommodate your building needs. (Whether your Sims respond favorably to your wallpaper choices is another matter). Build mode provides you the opportunity to construct a house from the ground up, and to augment any of your existing housing atrocities, er, accomplishments. Your journey from shanty to chateau begins as easily as pushing a button -The Build button.



Unless you've bulldozed a home or bought an empty lot, you'll most likely be using Build mode to modify an existing home; however, all the information here applies to both concerns. Entering Build mode reveals a panel consisting of two rows of architectural tools, six to a row. Clicking on a particular tool brings up a sub-panel of either structural elements (walls, floors, etc.) or placeable objects (fireplaces, staircases, etc.) related to the main tool choice. Each choice changes your cursor to something intimating that tool's function.



Clicking on the Build mode button pauses your game. You are able to use all of the View tools, which is to your advantage in getting a perspective on all the consequential angles of your constructions—use them liberally. Clicking on individual subpanel tool choices brings up information panels related to that tool's use or implementation. Resting your cursor on the tool brings up a text box of per-unit costs for tool use. For example, one unit of flooring costs you the displayed amount to fill a single grid square with that flooring style, and the dough is immediately deducted from your household account.

TOOLS OF THE BUILDING TRADE

Even if you can't drive a nail without chipping a nail, you're a master carpenter in The Sims. Here are all the tools you need to put together your Sim Shangri-La.

TERRAIN TOOLS



You can change the slope of your property with the Terrain tool, whether you want to dig out a gopher on a single patch of yard or lift your land in one long click and drag. There is a limit to how far you can raise and lower terrain (onscreen text indicates how far); we're not going to permit any mining on your property, or tottering Towers of Babel.

LOWER TERRAIN



Click with the Lower Terrain cursor at a tile intersection, and behold, the land sinks! When you reach its nether limits, the bar jumps to the next available tile intersection. Tiles with other elements (such as trees) on them can't be lowered.

LEVEL TERRAIN



If flat is your idea of a good time, click on the Level Terrain tool on any areas that are too uppity or too humble. When you release the mouse, they flatten. You won't be charged for any already flat areas mistakenly chosen in your clicking and dragging.

RAISE TERRAIN



Just as with lowering, so with raising: Click on any intersections of the grid with the long bar of the Raise cursor to lift four of the adjoining grid tiles from that intersection's center. Tiles with other elements (such as trees) on them can't be raised.

WATER TOOLS



Now this is living! If your bank account's bulging, you can splash down some cool pools, complete with diving board and ladders. You can even place them inside, if the sophisticated decadent look is to your taste. You have to make the pool big enough for your Sims to swim a few strokes, or they get frustrated. Be sure to put in a board and ladder as well so that everything goes swimmingly.

POOL TOOL



Click and drag with the Pool tool, fool (we couldn't resist; sorry) to put down some liquidy tiles. (Actually, initial clicks in open areas establishes a nine-tile pool area, with a single tile occupied by a water square; you can fill in the surrounding pool "siding" tiles with pool water tiles once those initial grids are established).

DIVING BOARD



Diving boards must be placed next to water tiles (as though we needed to tell a smart cookie like you). You can place multiple diving boards at a single pool, if you want the neighbors to talk about your extravagance.

LADDER TOOL



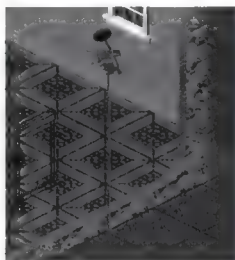
As with diving boards, place ladders next to water tiles. You can put many ladders in your pools if you want to give your Sims a lot of unnecessary choices on how to exit the pool. Hey, it's your money.

WALL & FENCE TOOLS



Here are the tools that would have made barn-raising a cinch in the old days. Some of the tools are more for the decorative arts than the structural sensibility. Any of the architectural objects (such as stairs, fireplaces, plants, etc.) can be placed in multiples by holding down the Shift key when you click to place them in the Sim world.

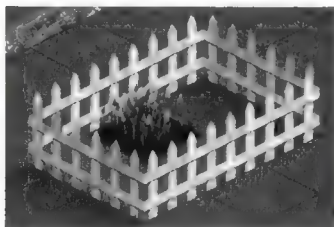
WALL TOOL



To place sections of wall, just click and drag from one gridline to another; release the mouse and you see a lovely wedge of unfinished wall, primed for wallpapering. You won't be able to place walls outside your property's gridlines. You can build out a closed rectangle of walling by holding down the Shift key while you drag. You can also build walls (and roofing and second stories) on a diagonal. If you happen to misplace wall sections, you can delete them by holding down the Control key and clicking and dragging on the wayward wall.

WHITE PICKET FENCE TOOL

Click and drag to add a classic touch to your plot. Sims must walk around fences, so you can keep them from tromping some of the shrubbery this way. Again, it's a matter of clicking and dragging from gridline intersections. You can also use the Shift key for instant areas of squared-off picketing. Be sure to place an opening in any of your fencing efforts, unless you really want to keep the Sims at bay; they need that passage to move through your fence work.

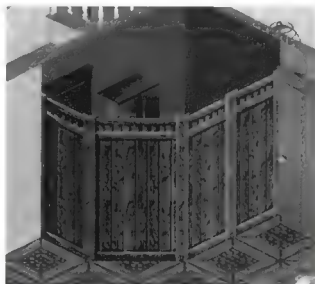


BALUSTRADE

A balustrade always offers a refined touch on a staircase or balcony, and if you use "balustrade" in conversation, all your friends will think you're ever so, so—so *pretentious*, so don't even try it. You can put balustrades on your pool, if you don't care a tinker's damn about what your house looks like. Shift key for balustrade "boxes."

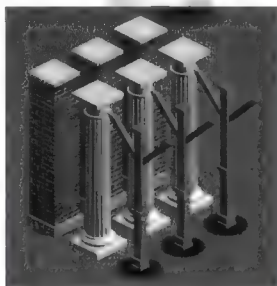
PRIVACY FENCE

This tool might deliver the "fringe element" fencing look you desire, if your Sims have piercings that can only be seen in the shower. You can use the Shift key to quickly make handsome little enclosures for penning in nosy neighbors.



COLUMN TOOL

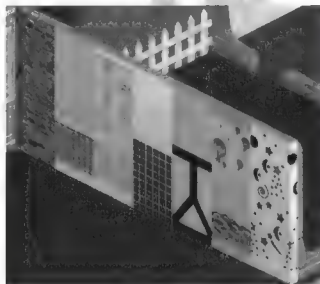
These lovely columns provide support for second-story floors and walls, although you can build second stories on the tops of any rooms with four contiguous walls, without column support. They are stylish all on their own, though—you don't need to even have walls near columns; you could put a little Parthenon replica near the bathhouse.



WALLPAPER TOOL



There are many styles of wallpapers, paints and coverings with which to adorn your walls: Why not a Liberace wall next to your John Wayne wall? Click and drag for individual wall panel treatment or Shift-click to cover an entire room in a stroke. All coverings cover both the interior and the exterior walls. If you've used a certain covering on the interior, it remains if you do a different covering on the exterior.



STAIR TOOL



Stairs, of course, imply a second story. See the Going Up section (page 93) for information. Stairs can be repositioned within rooms just like any other placeable object. After your second story floor is established, just click with the Stair tool where you want it placed, and it rises up through the floor. You can place more than one staircase in a room if you have those kind of pompous leanings.

FIREPLACE TOOL



The definition of cozy, and yours for only 600 Simoleons and up—your Sims could always jog to warm up instead. Fireplaces come in four flavors, and must be placed against a wall. Sure, you could put one near that bed on the balcony, but remember that some clumsy Sims have a tendency to start fires on some combustible objects.

PLANT TOOL

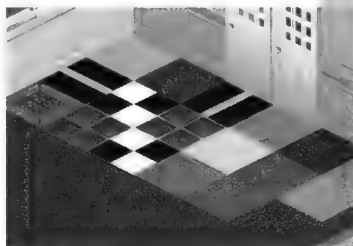


There are trees, shrubs and flowers available to spruce up your Simscape. And they stay green all year long as long as some Sim or hired hand tends to them occasionally. Placing a row of trees or hedges is as simple as multiple clicks on the grid intersections. Plants can be deleted just like other placed objects. But stay green, Simsters, stay green.

FLOOR TOOL



So many styles of flooring: Mix and match, or mix and mismatch. Yes, you can put asphalt in your living room. Be the talk of the neighborhood! Shift-click to fill an entire room with your flooring selection; Shift-Control click to undo that deed. Control-click to erase individual floor-tile travesties.



DOOR TOOL



What would a house be without one—a prison! Several door styles for your placement pleasure, and why stop at double-doors, when five or six make such a statement?

WINDOW TOOL



A beautiful selection and a couple are doozies. Check out that El Sol window, for the impress-the-neighbors effect.

ROOF TOOL



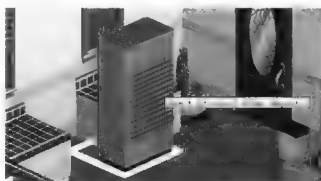
The Roof tool is a topper. Clicking on the Roof tool reveals a sub-panel of roofing pitches, or steepnesses, as well as a selection of roofing styles. Roofs default to medium pitch and the initial style selection if you don't make your move to change them. And because there's no charge for roofing pitch or style changes, you can go in anytime and muck around with those choices without wasting the household's money.

HAND TOOL



If you put that fireplace too close to where you hang your garlic, you can always move it. Click on the Hand tool to reposition and rotate placeable Build (and Buy) objects. Move an object by simply clicking on it (it now shows a yellow tile highlight) moving it to the right spot and clicking again. If it's properly positioned, it settles into place.

Rotating works the same as it does in Buy mode. Just click and drag, mouse button down, on a selected object to rotate it in the drag direction; Follow the rotation cursor to encourage a direction. Potentially successful rotations (as with object placements) show the object in its regular color; objects that can't be rotated or placed in certain positions show a pink coloring that tells you "no!" You also get tooltip messages advising you why your placement doesn't work.



Some objects, such as fireplaces, can only be placed against walls, so up against the wall with them. You can also delete objects clicked on with the Hand tool by pressing the Delete button or by moving them into the Control Panel.

UNBUILDING

Most of the structural tools work using click and drag. Click, and while holding your mouse button down, drag to place “rows” of whatever building element you want place. Building fees are deducted with each tile element placed. You can undo and redo recent Build choices by clicking on the Undo or Redo buttons at the left side of the tool rows. Many of the structural elements (walls, doors, windows) can be deleted by choosing that element type in the subpanel, holding down the Control key and moving your cursor over the element. (Your cursor changes into the old universal “No” symbol).



When the element highlights in that pinkish tint, click and it disappears. You can click the Undo button if you change your mind. Deleting placeable objects works the same way as it does in Buy mode. Click on the object and hit the Delete key, or drag the object down to the Control Panel.

(Using Undo in the same Build session gets your dough back, but build something and then delete it, and you get back less than you paid for it). You can't delete walls with anything hanging on them, or with a toilet attached.

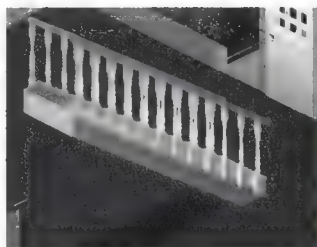
Combining the Shift key with the Control key in some instances removes larger numbers or sections (i.e., an entire wall's worth of wallpaper) of placed elements; see the tool's information window to see if that condition applies.

GOING UP: BUILDING SECOND STORIES

Second stories are easily put together. When you want to put in a second story over a room (or multiple rooms), make sure there are four contiguous walls. Click on the Second Story button in the Control Panel and you see a grid pattern form over the touching walls. You can then use the Wall tool to put in your walls, and then make your Floor selection. Put in whatever windows and doors you want, and then decorate the walls to suit. (Are you feeling powerful yet?)



It's probably a good idea to position the stairs before you make your roof selection. When you place your stairs, they emerge from the first floor through the first-floor roof without you having to make any provision for them penetrating the floor above. Use your View (strip those walls down) and Rotation tools to get these things just right.



Notice that when you add the floor to the second story, the grid extends one tile beyond the wall, and sticks out into space. This was done so you can make hanging balconies over the first floor. Fill that first row of overhanging tiles with a floor covering and you get a second tile extension to produce a two-tile overhanging balcony. You can continue the balcony out to the end of your property if you support it with columns.



With the right plant placement, you can replicate the Hanging Gardens of Simylon. This is as far as an overhang balcony can go. And yes, you can put your bed out there, if fresh air is foremost in your Sim's mind. (Whom are you calling an airhead?)

Second stories by nature complicate the management of your Sims, but they do provide some hideaways for stressed Sims to escape, and make for interesting Charges of the Bladder Brigade if there's only one bathroom in the house.

TROUBLESHOOTING YOUR FAMILY: ASK AUNTIE SIMONE

You know, you really can't turn your back on a Sim, at least not for very long. They are always up to something—even when they're sleeping, they're dreaming about being up to something. We know that Sim management isn't a bed of roses. (Many of these Sims wouldn't water them anyway).

Auntie Simone, your ever-so-accommodating (if a touch prickly) hostess presents here some Q&As covering a lot of the typical trouble spots in the game, where you're having difficulty moving your Sims progressively forward, or where they are aggressively resisting that movement. Don't let 'em backtalk you—they're just electronic punks, after all.

My Sims are unemployed. How do I get them jobs? I can't afford stuff!

And I've got a headache, but who listens to me? Anyway, you can't just expect Sim jobs to be handed to you—you've got to take initiative! Send your jobless Sims out to pick up that daily paper, and have them scan it for potential jobs (through the pie menu, of course). They get an onscreen dialog detailing job type and specifics, including how many Simoleons they make every day to pay for their bon-bons.

You can decline the offer and wait for tomorrow's paper in hopes of a brighter career. If your Sims are real computer-owning tech-heads, they can get up to three offers a day online. Remember, all these offers are for entry-level jobs, but with a little effort, you can grovel your way up the ladder. Look at the Careers material in the Soul of a Sim section (page 37). And for goodness' sake, stop whining.

My Sims are lonely. I can see it in their faces. How does a Sim get a date?

Believe me dearie, they might be better off with a good book. Didn't you know Sartre said "Hell is other people?" If you must, though, here's a hint or two: You'll probably get some visitors coming by to welcome your Sim to the neighborhood. Be sure to direct your Sims to greet them, accept any gifts they might be carrying, let them come in and relax. Be social—yak it up. It's not going to happen immediately, but as your Sim warms up to the stranger, there are more pie menu choices that can open up a world of sociability. Just don't force too much, too soon. This is elaborated on in the Soul of a Sim (page 37) under Daily Life/Neighbors. (And talking about neighbors, if you create your own, your Sims have more friend-gathering opportunities—look over the Families, from Start to Finish section (page 29).

You might find a bit later on, that in giving a friend a call (if your Sims have a phone—and you must buy one) to see if they want to visit that they might suggest bringing over a friend of their own. It could be the start of a nice cult, or perhaps a sewing circle.

My Sims are rolling in dough. How do I add a second story to their house?

Don't you know that bragging about money is a sign of poor breeding? All right showoff, here's how. Position your house in the rotation and view that gives you the best building access for the new story. Go into Build mode and click on the Second-Story button in the Control Panel; you see a framed grid appear over your first story. Use the Wall tool to drag-place the walls to support the second-story roof along the existing wall's grid lines. You can also use the Column tools for additional support and aesthetics. Control-click to delete any misplaced segments.

When the walls are placed, use the Floor tools to place a spiffy floor with your designer's eye—and mouse. Then select the pitch and style of roof you prefer in the Roof tool choices and you can cap off your walls. Be sure to put a set of stairs that gives good access to the new story rooms. Decorate the walls to suit with the Wallpaper tool. Remember that you don't have to put rooms over all of the existing ground floor. You can build rooms (with roofs) one at a time and go from there. Look at the Building Your Dream House section (page 84) for more on home building.

If my Sims are single, can they start a family?

With your record, darling, I'd probably stick to raising hamsters. But if your soul cries out for the pathetic patter, I mean, pitter-patter of little feet around the house, even the single Sim has a shot at it. If you had the sense to pay attention to question 2, you already know that with a little effort you can gradually build up a network of friends, inside and outside your house. Well, if among those friends there's one that spins your Sim's dials, you can s-l-o-w-l-y (there's nothing so sad as a panting Sim) start to put some moves on the passionate party in question. (If it's a neighbor, you're going to have to get them to move in first, another matter entirely. Look at the Moving In material under Soul of a Sim).

Once the love muffin is in the house and friendly, your pie menu gives you some opportunities to pitch some woo toward your potential sweetie, but make sure you've thrown some warm-up pitches first. Make sure they think you're quite a tamale yourself, and that they're in a good mood. If you can go from pleasant pecks to passionate kisses, you just might find a proposal asking if you'd like to get married. Once hitched, if the kisses continue to move up the ladder of love, you get a dialog asking if you'd like to have a baby! (That's one sly stork). And occasionally, same-sex couples might even get such an onscreen offer, but don't sew any booties just yet.

A burglar just stole all my Sims' stuff! Is there no justice?

Did you ever think about locking the doors, o thou with the duncecap so high? Oh, I know, I know, you can't lock the doors, my mistake. However, you can buy a burglar alarm pretty early in your game, and with one of those installed, the cops are right on your burglar as soon as he starts his prowling. (And you might find it worth more than just the preservation of your Sim stuff as well).

Even without an alarm, since the arrival of a burglar does center your screen right on the offending event, if you're quick enough and there's a phone right there, you can make the burgled Sims call the cops, and the authorities show up, pronto. And if some catty cat burglar does make off with your paintings, there's always the flea market....

Some Sim dunderhead just lit the house on fire—how can I prevent that from ever happening again?

Well, some Sims just can't be trusted with matches. You might want to only let Sims that have some Cooking skills be your fire-starters; otherwise, a fire can be a risk, and a lethal one at that. Also, if you're Sims are quick on the phone while the fire's still contained, they can use the Service menu to call the fire department, and they come over with sirens screaming. Adult Sims also have the ability to extinguish fires through a pie menu choice, so if that's the way you want to go, order the extinguishing before the fire spreads very far. (And please note: it's dangerous for them to be in the midst of a raging fire, extinguisher or not).

And don't be so quick to put objects real close to the barbecue or the fireplace—you wouldn't do that in your own house, would you? (Don't answer that). You can also buy a fire alarm and place it right next to that burglar alarm, so that you can congratulate yourself for showing foresight and care. Having the alarm means the fire-folks get there lickety-split, and your Sims can go back to preening in front of the mirrors and grilling lamb chops.

One important issue with both fire and burglar alarms: They only work in the rooms in which they're placed, so either put 'em in all the rooms, or be willing to lose the stuff in the rooms without alarms.

Is it possible to go visit another Sim household while you're playing a game?

Not directly, but in essence, yes. If you play games in a number of the Neighborhood houses, you see that Sim inhabitants from local houses after a time come to visit the current game house, carrying (and acting through) the personalities they bear in their own homes. However, you won't be able to direct those visiting Sims to act; you just have to make the Sims in your current game house act upon them. If you want certain Sims to visit another house, just go to a house by way of the Neighborhood screen and then call the desired visitors on the phone and invite 'em all over. They have to be acquainted first, of course). Check out the Friends and Lovers and Neighbors material in the Soul of a Sim section (page 37) for more on visiting.

And if you're just trying to see if other Sims have nicer furnishings than your favorite Sim, shame on you.

I'm worried—what if my Sims get too old to take care of new kids?

Not victims of time's myriad cruelties (though the digital realm can trash them in different ways), with care your Sims remain the fresh-faced frolickers that you've always known them to be. Your adult Sims stay frisky and fertile, and your kid Sims remain kid-like and slovenly, er, cuddly. Babies do develop into kids, but kids never develop into adults. Hey, they can hardly bear the embarrassment of their parents' entry-level-job carpool cars.

Can Sims drop out of school?

Is this one of those questions that starts with "I have a friend that..."? Well, no matter if you only cracked the books to slip in notes to your classmates, your kid Sims have responsibilities, and one of those is to attend school and study hard in order to attain good grades. If they don't do these things, there can be serious consequences. They can't exactly drop out of school, but if you imperil their education by slacking off in directing them to achieve, you might see something metaphorically "drop" on them. And it ain't pretty. Check out the Kids stuff in the Soul of a Sim section (page 37) for more on kids and schools.

This younger generation has no respect for adults, or for learning. How do I get them to improve their grades?

Work 'em, work 'em long and hard, don't feed 'em much, and let 'em sleep only when they're about to drop. Oh, wait a minute! You want to know how to improve those kids' grades—sorry. I thought you were asking how I improve the moral fiber of my kids. In the Sims world, as in ours, the children are expected to study hard, mind their manners, and dream of lots of expensive household electronic gadgets. In order for them to do well in school, you need to send them off to school punctually, and they need to be in a good mood.

That means paying attention to their Needs scores, and keeping them positive before the school day begins. Be sure to buy a few bookcases and send those kids to do some studying when they're just lounging around at night, the little weasels. And they can also study on the computer, so it's high time your Sims bought one, for the sake of the children! As for you, slim, go easy on the potato chips.

Hey, my Sim isn't bringing home enough bacon. How do I switch Sim jobs?

The switch isn't all that positive. If your Sim worker misses a couple of days at work, the boss calls to let you know that your worker's Sim's services aren't needed at the salt mine any longer—they are fired. (They can take a single day off at any time, however). Then you can begin the long haul of pushing your Sim up the ladder from the bottom: All fired workers start at entry-level jobs (though they do keep their skills and friends, which might apply to new jobs).

So, it might be best to wait a little bit (but not too long, because your household really needs the money to grow) until a job comes up on the career track that you think your Sim is suited for, rather than producing a sad-sack Sim that's lost job after job. But do get them employed—spending Sims are happy Sims. Check out the Careers material in the Soul of a Sim section for elaboration.

My Sim thinks his roommates are a drag—can he move to another house?

Of course Sims can move—haven't you seen them dance when the stereo's blasting and they're feeling it? Those Sims can move! All right, I'm calm now: Yes, your Sims can become productive (or regressive) members of other households, if that's what you're interested in. If you've played the game a bit you've seen that houses can get a lot of visitor traffic. Those visitors are the Sims from the other Neighborhood houses, some of whom you probably designed all by yourself.

If you create the correct conditions, i.e., a current house Sim is in a good mood and likes the visiting Sim, and the visiting Sim is in a good mood and likes the resident Sim, you see that the pie menu might contain the Move In option when you direct your resident Sim in action toward your visiting Sim. If you exercise that option, that visiting Sim can choose to move in. See the Moving In material (page 56) in the Soul of a Sim section for details on asset transfers.

Also, if you evict a Sim from a house (look over the Welcome to the Neighborhood section) they go back to the Pick a Family screen, patiently waiting for you to move them into a different house.

I've got the laziest Sim kid in the world. She sits around the house watching TV, never cleans up her room and has to be forced to study for school. Her friends come over, eat like wolverines and leave the place a mess. What are my alternatives? How do I straighten this punk out? Or how do I throw her out?

Well, we're being a touch critical, aren't we? And what example was set by this Sim's overseer, might I ask? Anyway, when you've got a kiddy Sim that would rather nap than toil, that's a result of his or her personality, and it's not something you can change. However, you can experiment: ride her butt, constantly directing her to clean up. Get rid of the TV and see what she does. Block her friends from coming over (keep family members busy, so they can't greet the visitors at the door).

You can't actually directly throw out a kid, but with some creative thinking and actions on behalf—your behalf—of the kid's academic performance (think duncecap), you might be able to bring about a significant change in the child's wherewithal—and whereabouts.

What are the Sims dreaming about?

Boy, can't these Sims get any kind of a break? Now you're pestering them in their sleep as well? Well, Bad Big Brother, if you care to observe the Sims while they're dozing, you can see that the dream balloons above their heads contain little pictorial messages about the contents of their slumbering minds. The Sims' dream concerns flit about much as ours do, often holding forth about their favorite people, objects and conversational topics. And you better watch your nosiness level buster; we might just hook up some REM-scanning electrodes to you.

I made a mistake in Build mode, now what do I do?

Send \$500 care of my address to—oh, never mind. Build mode bungles aren't all that troublesome. If you've misplaced walls, you can just Control-click on the offending element to remove it. Some architectural elements (but not structural items like walls and windows) can be moved around just like items from Buy mode. Click on the hand tool and move them around. Rotating elements work just as in Buy mode.

Using the Undo button in Build mode is easy on the wallet too—undoing a Build mode action (say the placing of a door) removes the action's effect and return all the action's purchase price to your Sim house assets. You can click on and delete architectural items (like a fireplace) as well, but you get back less than what you paid for it. The Building Your Dream House section (page 84) gives you more building pointers.

Times are hard on the Farm—can I sell stuff I’ve bought to build up the old household account?

Yes, as long as you paid for them first, you little sleazebag. Oh, you mean in The Sims? Indeed household objects purchased through Buy mode can be sold back for some cash. If you sell them back early in Sim game time, you might get back your full purchase price (and if you’re really a shrewd buyer, you might get more than your purchase price). Wait a while longer, and those things that bear traces of Sim wear and tear won’t bring a full redemption. Click on the items in question while in Buy mode and you see the amount of cash that can be reclaimed for any deleted item. Look over the Buy mode section (page 18) for more.

How come it seems like my Sims go to work or school every ding-dang day?

Your Sims are courageous captains of industry and accomplishment—they don’t need weekends spent eating potato chips and lolling on the couch. (Of course, certain nameless Sims that we know might indulge a bit in these practices). Indeed, every Sim game day is a working day for employed Sims and a school day for kid Sims. However, if you see that your Sim is slaving and stressed with all these demands, you can have them take a day off—without pay, mind you—now and then without it being of great consequence. Just don’t let that one day stretch into two, or their job is lost—the boss calls and break the news. And kids’ grades slip if they miss school.

Why do some objects say “No action available”?

You’ve just got to mess with every little thing, don’t you? It’s like this: Some Sims just don’t use certain objects. For example, kids don’t need to be drinking any coffee to get their jollies, so they don’t have a coffee-drinking action available. Some objects, like an empty trash can, only have an action available when the object is “active,” in this case, with trash. Some objects, like a table, won’t have an action associated with them unless another object is added, say a food dish or a newspaper. And some objects are just plain stubborn, so leave them alone.

And lastly, here’s a general tip that you might find operates in your own world as well: Even if your Sims have a lot of Simoleons in the bank, they are not as happy as they could be. Yes, yes, we all have heard those axioms about thrift, and a penny saved and all, but in the Sims world, that means that you’re not buying stuff. And not buying stuff is a problem.

Not buying stuff means you’re not upgrading the Sims’ environment so that it’s easier to make them happy. Remember, higher-quality objects, of all kinds, give you a more efficient means to raise the moods of those moody Sims. They’re consumers, you know, and they are most happy when they can have a choice between pinball or the piano, computer games or the plasma TV. They want it all.

APPENDIX 1

BUILD YOUR SIM SKINS AND OTHER SIMS WEB WONDERS

Some of you Sim-manipulators can tamper with the trappings of the game in a way that's even more direct than telling your creations when it's time to clean the toilet. You might want to make sure that the bathroom walls are just the color and texture that you like, and that the Sim wielding the brush looks just like your little brother. Well, all questions of good sense and taste aside, we're going to let you do just that.

Going to <http://www.TheSims.com> takes you to links on *The Sims* website for downloading tools for designing Sim skins—the appearance of your characters—and for designing walls and floors. The site includes helpful tutorials (that you can read with your browser) for putting these evil ideas into practice.

If you've checked the Export HTML option in the Play Options for the game, important JPEG shots of family members (with statistics), family houses and house information is saved (by house address) in the Web Pages folder of *The Sims* directory. It happens automatically—you can just delete them if they're unwanted or edit them in an image-editing program.

Each family will have a web page. Click on the View Web Pages button in the neighborhood screen to view these web pages.

APPENDIX 2

RECOMMENDED READING

Here are some titles that might enhance your understanding of some of the background and social issues entertained in *The Sims*. Warning: all are filled with provocative ideas; Maxis disavows any responsibility for encouraging deep thought.

Home: A Short History of an Idea by Witold Rybczynski (July 1987)
Penguin USA; ISBN: 0140102310

Notes on the Synthesis of Form by Christopher W. Alexander (June 1970)
Harvard University Press; ISBN: 0674627512

A Pattern Language : Towns, Buildings, Construction by Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein (1977)
Oxford University Press (Trade); ISBN: 0195019199

Architecture : Form, Space, & Order by Frank D. K. Ching, Francis D. Ching (February 1996)
John Wiley & Sons; ISBN: 0471286168

Housing by Lifestyle : The Component Method of Residential Design by James W. Wentling (November 1994)
McGraw-Hill; ISBN: 0070692939

Time for Life : The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time by John P. Robinson, Geoffrey Godbey (Contributor), Robert Putnam (June 1997)
Pennsylvania State University Press (Trade); ISBN: 0271016523

Maps of the Mind by C. Hampden-Turner (March 1982)
MacMillan Publishing Company; ISBN: 0025477404

Hidden Order: The Economics of Everyday Life by David D. Friedman (September 1997)
HarperCollins; ISBN: 0887308856

Making the Most of Your Llama by Linda C. Beattie (Editor), Araneen Witmer (Illustrator), Kathryn Doll (Editor), Dr. Linda Beattie (September 1998)
Kopacetic Ink; ISBN: 0961963417

Finding Your Perfect Love by Arthur Clark, Cassandra Skouras (January 1998)
Rosebud Press; ISBN: 0965276902

The User Illusion : Cutting Consciousness Down to Size by Tor Norretranders, Jonathan Sydenham (Translator) (April 1998)
Viking Press; ISBN: 0670875791

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Original Music Compositions:	© 2000 Electronic Arts Music Publishing Inc. (ASCAP) except "Neighborhood1", "Neighborhood2", "Latin4", "Buy2", "Buy4", "Build4", "Jazz4", "Jazz5" © 2000 Road Wing Music, Inc. (BMI) (P) 2000 Electronic Arts Inc.
Composers:	Jerry Martin, Marc Russo
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Singers:	Frank Biner, Marchino Brazil, Sandy Cressman, Molly Mastick, Laurice McCoy-Ozjuwah, Dan Mendoza, Dave Meniketti, Glenn Walters

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